

# Approaches to HSC Standard English

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# *Workshop Objectives*

Strategies, ideas and approaches to support students to:

- appreciate and analyse critically how language, form, features and structure shape meaning
- compose analytical and personal short answer and sustained responses for reading tasks and essay questions
- make meaningful connections between texts
- select appropriate and effective texts of own choosing for the Area of Study and the relevant modules in Standard and Advanced
- compose original imaginative responses

# High Expectations

*‘Schools that establish high expectations for all students and provide the support necessary to achieve these expectations have high rates of academic success’  
(Bernard 1995).*

WHAT MATTERS MOST  
IS HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF.





# Approaches

- 'Nailing it!'
- No excuses
- Deadlines
- Immersion in writing
- Chunking the writing
- Modelling and exemplars
- The flow!
- Rich and evocative texts
- HSC concepts and requirements



- *'If our aim is to improve student performance, not just measure it, we must ensure that students know the performances expected of them, the standards against which they will be judged, and have opportunities to learn from the assessment in future assessments'* (Wiggins, 2002).
- *'If performance flaws are not detected and corrected, these can become ingrained and will be much harder to eradicate later'* ((Dinham, 2008).

# THE SKY IS THE LIMIT



*When you have a dream, don't let anything dim it.  
Keep hoping, keep trying ... the sky is the limit!*  
*Anonymous*

# Haptics

- The act of writing is a complex cognitive process relying on intricate perceptual sensorimotor combinations.
- The physical action of forming letters while writing by hand is important in helping the brain to remember the letters that are written.
- Mangen and Velay 2012



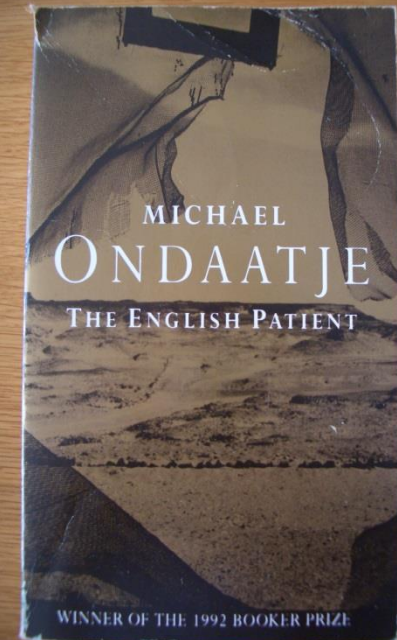
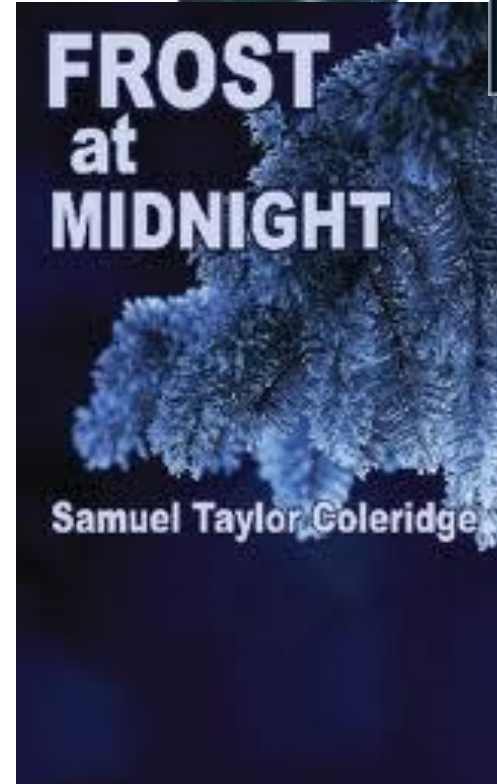
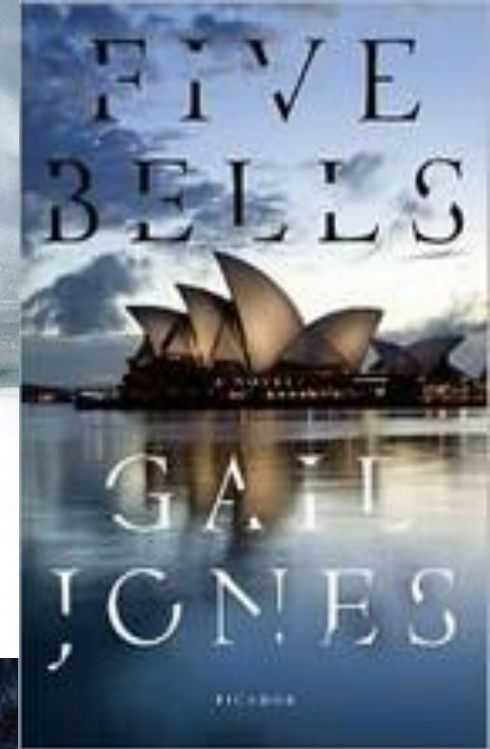
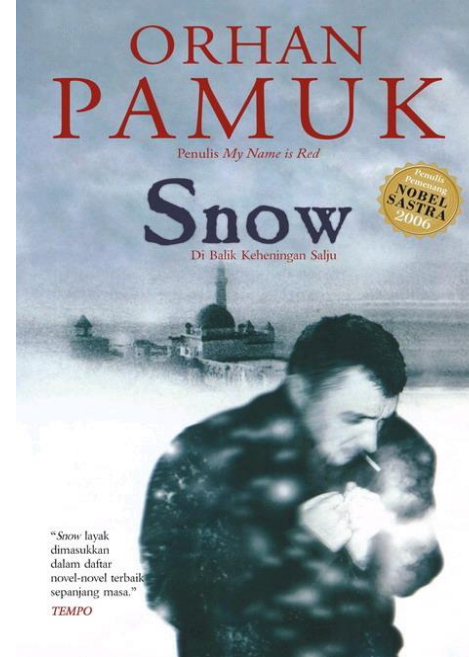
## Enriching understanding and use of language

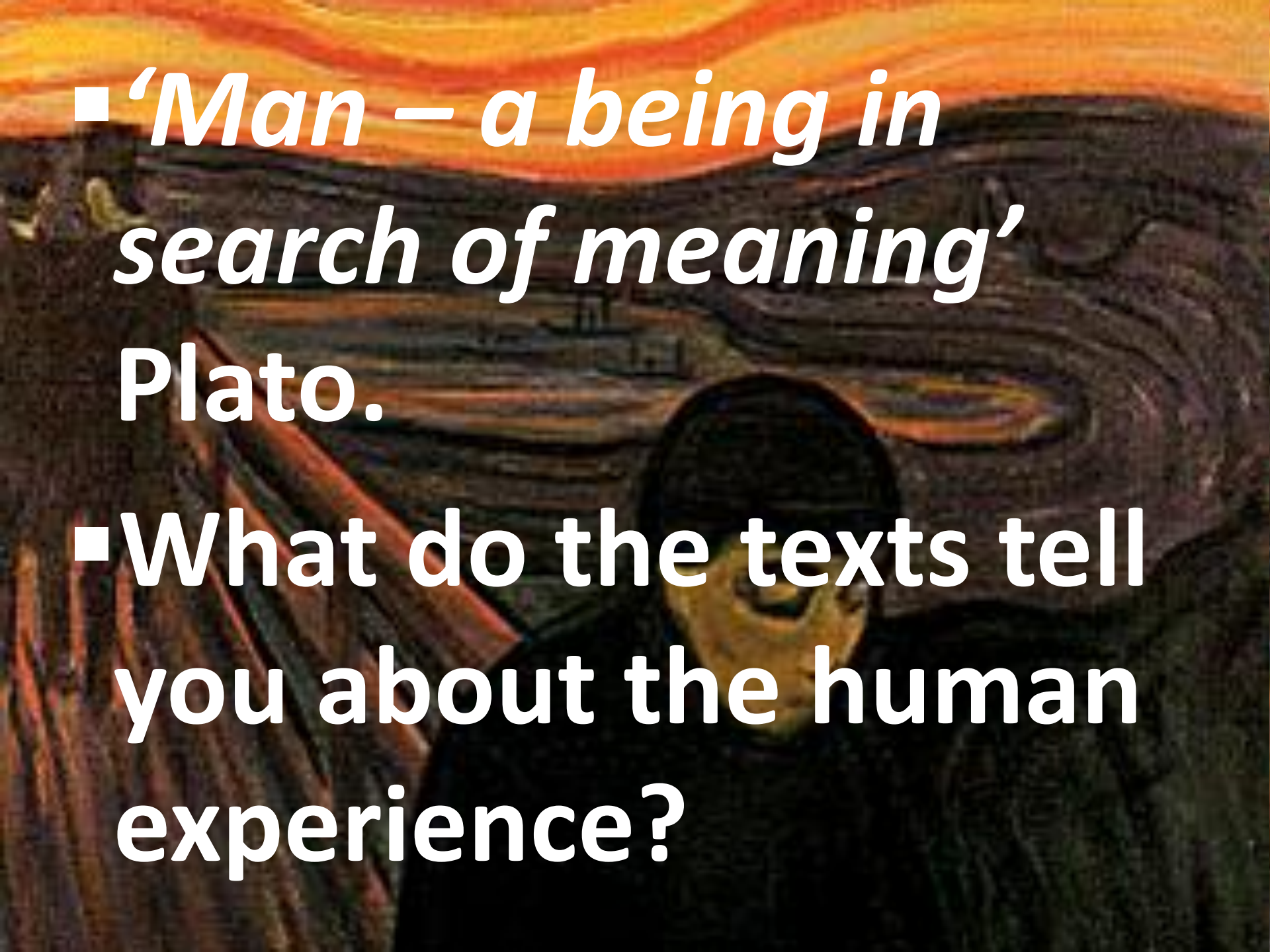
- Verbs: evaluate, discuss...
- BOS glossary
- Language terms and techniques
- Spotlighting at the word and sentence level
- Synthesis: The overarching concepts and ideas



# Experiencing Texts

- Plethora of extracts Artistry
- Form and structure
- Cafes – students as experts analysing texts
- Found texts – stealing lines
- Billy Collin's 'Forgetfulness'  
-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADCIXAjxe0M>
- Omar Musa -  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u8dz50GbVk>
- Emulating styles, such as Winton



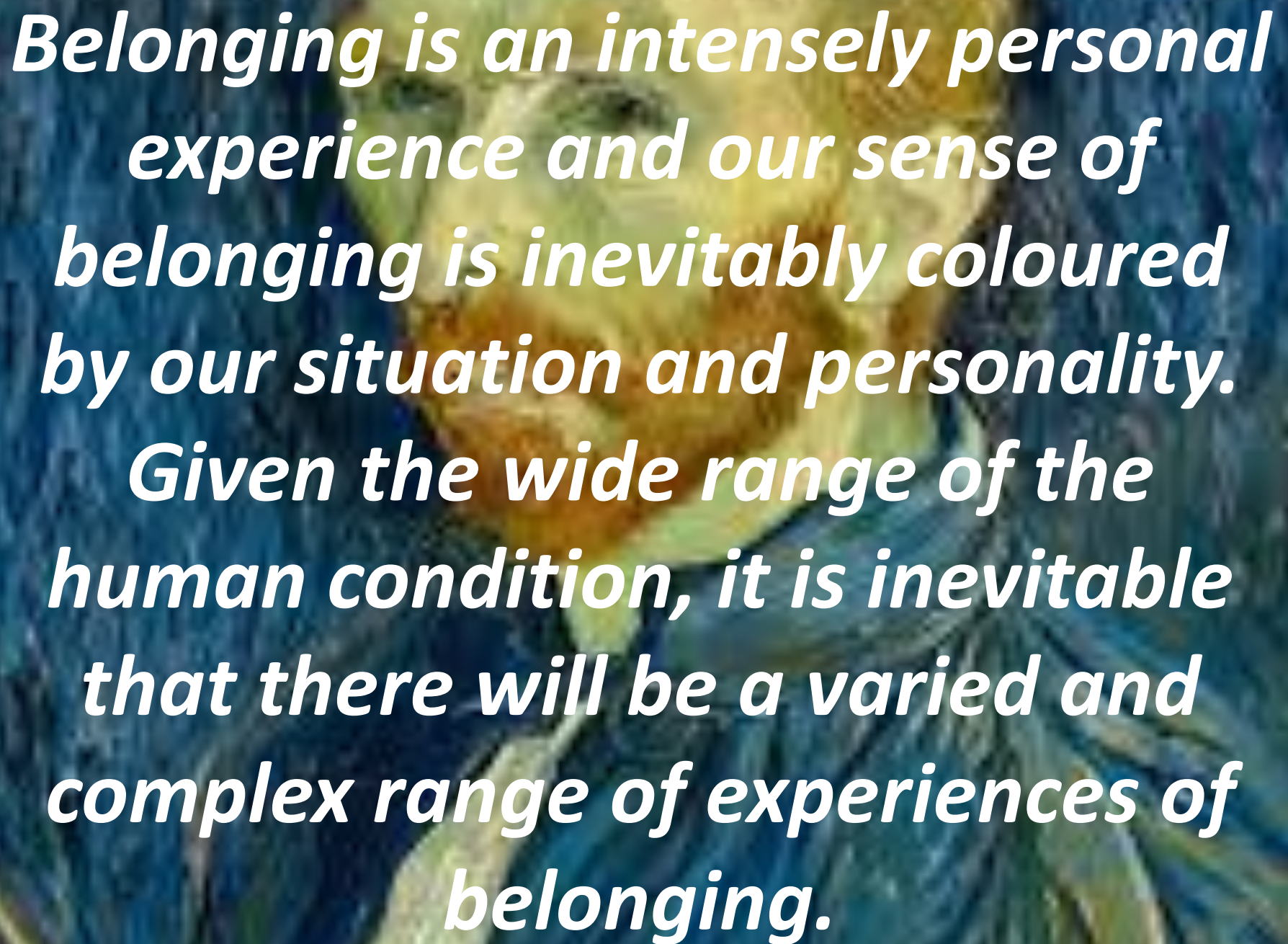
The background of the slide is a painting. It depicts a man in a dark, swirling landscape. The sky is a vibrant orange and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The man is in the foreground, looking down, with a dark, swirling landscape around him. The overall mood is contemplative and dramatic.

- *'Man – a being in search of meaning'*  
Plato.

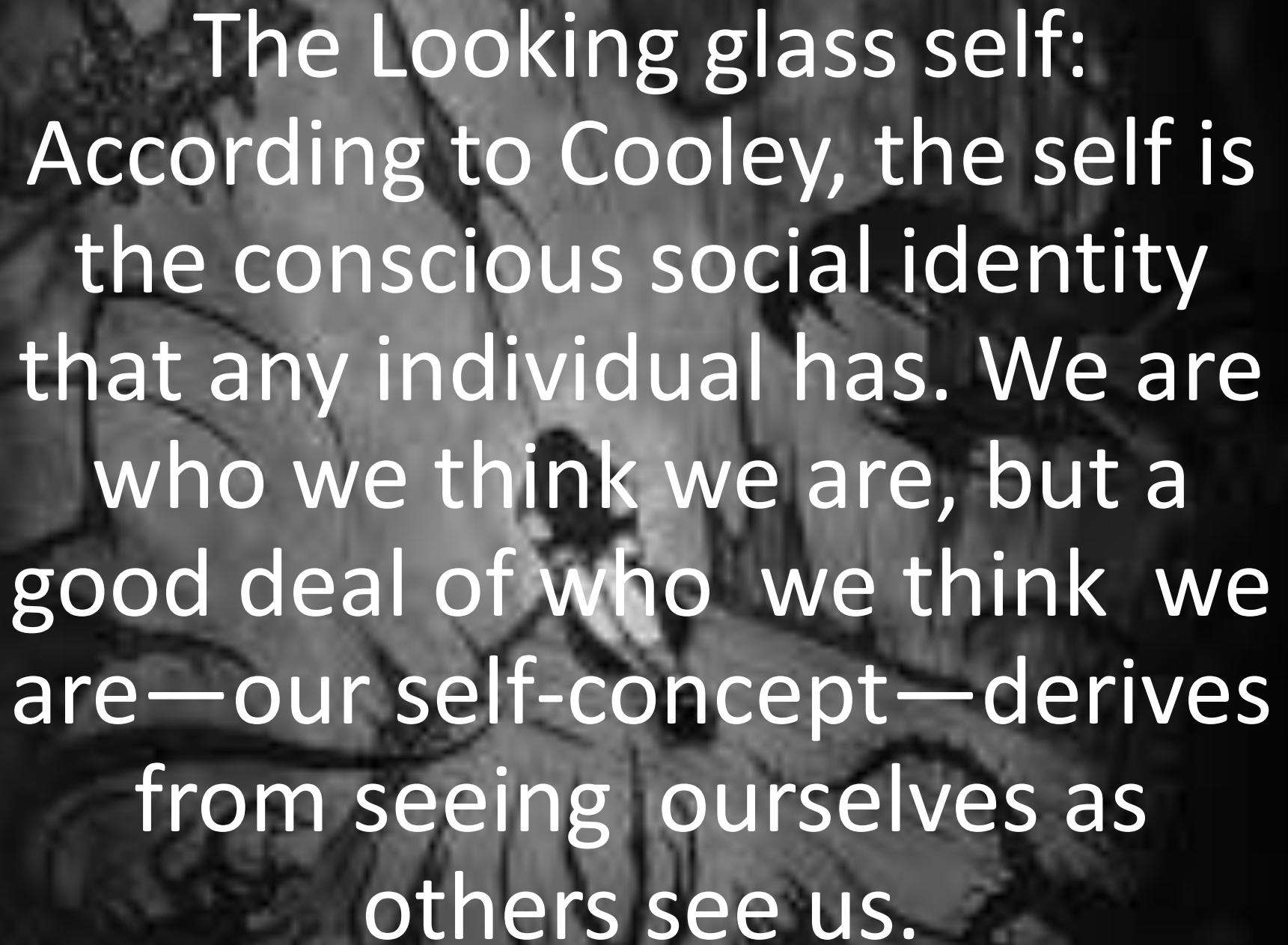
- What do the texts tell you about the human experience?



# AOS: Belonging



*Belonging is an intensely personal experience and our sense of belonging is inevitably coloured by our situation and personality. Given the wide range of the human condition, it is inevitable that there will be a varied and complex range of experiences of belonging.*



The Looking glass self:  
According to Cooley, the self is  
the conscious social identity  
that any individual has. We are  
who we think we are, but a  
good deal of who we think we  
are—our self-concept—derives  
from seeing ourselves as  
others see us.

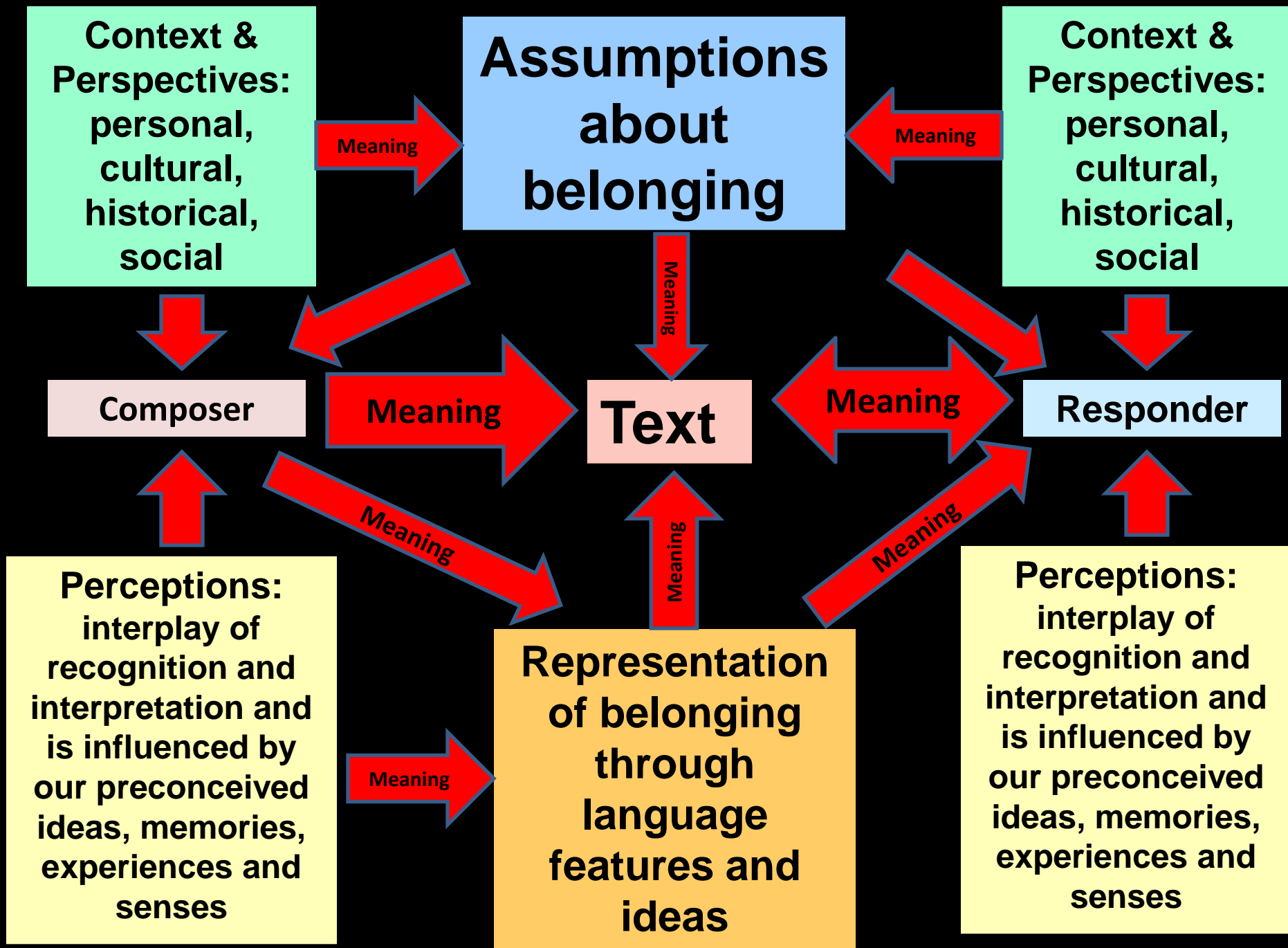


*We shall not cease from  
exploration*

*And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we  
started*

*And know the place for the first  
time.*

**TS. Eliot – ‘The Waste Land’**



The background of the slide is an abstract, colorful composition. It features a central, bright red and orange circular shape, possibly representing a sun or a musical note, surrounded by swirling green and yellow lines. Faint, stylized musical notes and staff lines are visible in the background, particularly on the right side. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and artistic expression.

# The Rubric

- **Perceptions** and ideas of belonging, or of not belonging, vary.
- These perceptions are shaped within personal, cultural, historical and social **contexts**.
- A sense of belonging can emerge from the connections made with **people, places, groups, communities and the larger world**.
- Students may consider aspects of belonging in terms of **experiences and notions of identity, relationships, acceptance and understanding**.

# The Concept of Belonging

- How do you view the notion of belonging?
- Do the texts invite you to belong to their worlds?
- How do the texts represent the concept of belonging?
- How do your perception and assumptions about belonging compare with that of the composers you are studying?
- Has your perspective been challenged or altered?
- What lines of argument have you developed as a result?

# Theses

- Essential to develop at least four overarching theses or points of view
- A synthesis of the ideas you have gathered about belonging.
- Apply to all sections of Paper 1.





# Theses

Belonging is  
an  
ambivalent  
notion; a  
dynamic state  
of flux.





# Theses

The greatest barrier to belonging is the self: our perceptions, assumptions and degree of self-efficacy act as enablers or impediments.





# Theses

Belonging comes from within rather than without. To belong is to be. We cannot belong until we understand ourselves.



# Theses

Place plays a fundamental role in the lives of human beings, it is the nexus of existence. Our physical, psychological and cultural connection to the world we move in impacts on our perception of belonging.



# Section 1: Reading Task

- *“Strong responses demonstrated perception and insight into the **ideas** embedded in the texts and supported a thesis with effective **textual evidence**.”*
- *“Weaker responses simply described the content of either the written or visual without linking them”*
- *“A discussion which focused primarily on language techniques often restricted the candidates’ opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the ideas in the texts or to develop their ideas effectively”*



- The ideas!
- Composer's purpose and attitude towards belonging
- **How** language features, form and structure represent belonging
- How students respond **personally** to the ideas in the texts.





# Reading Task

- Use 10 minutes reading time to look for the **overarching concept** or theme about Belonging
- Interrogate the **questions**.
- Check the **mark value**
- **Support** answers with examples and specific quotations.



# Enriching analytical skills

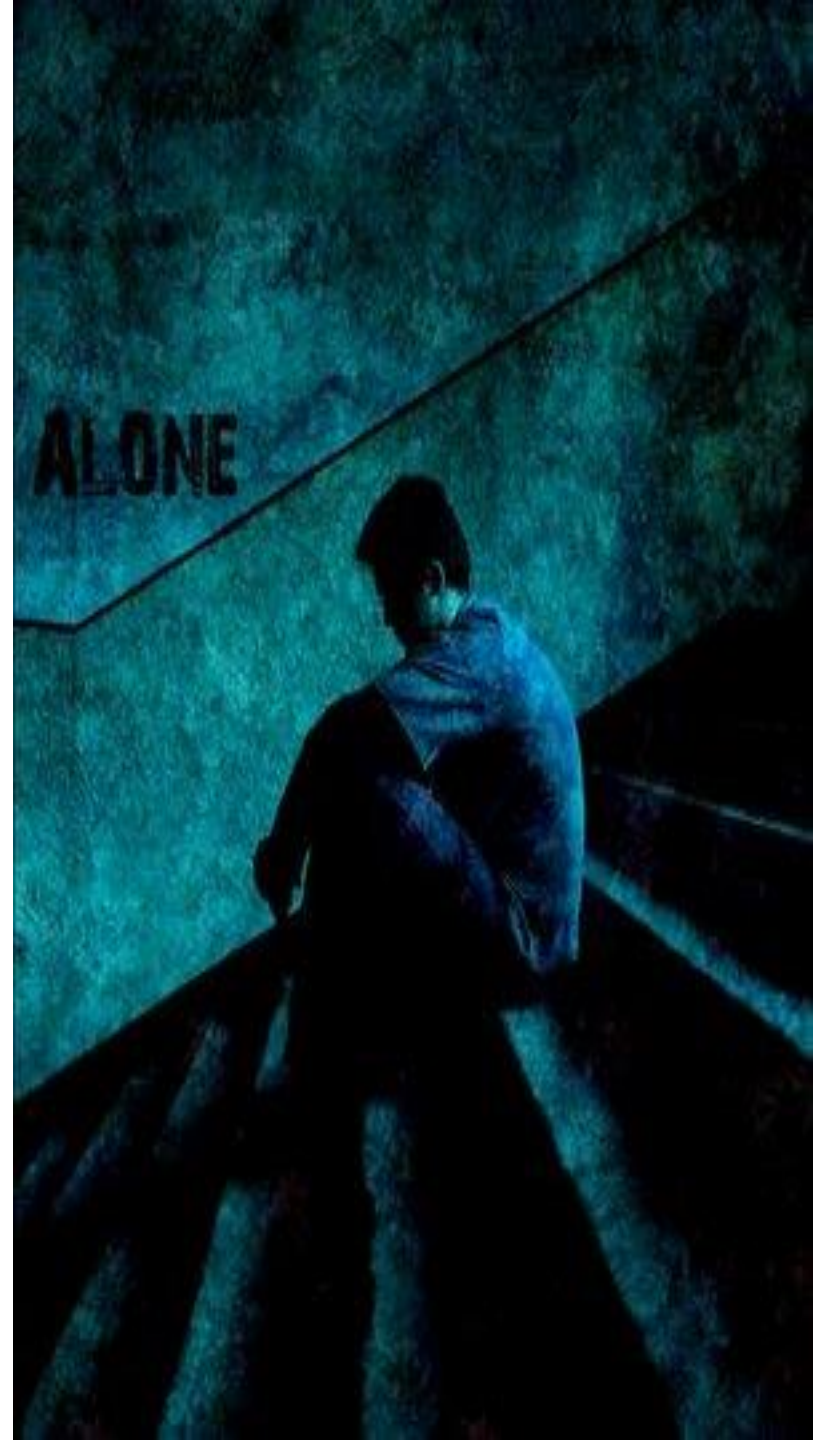
- Interrogating the composer's purpose and intended audience
- Composing expositions with a purpose
- Finding the emotive words or salient images first to uncover the meaning
- Highlighting key words
- Privileging ideas over techniques



# Reading Task

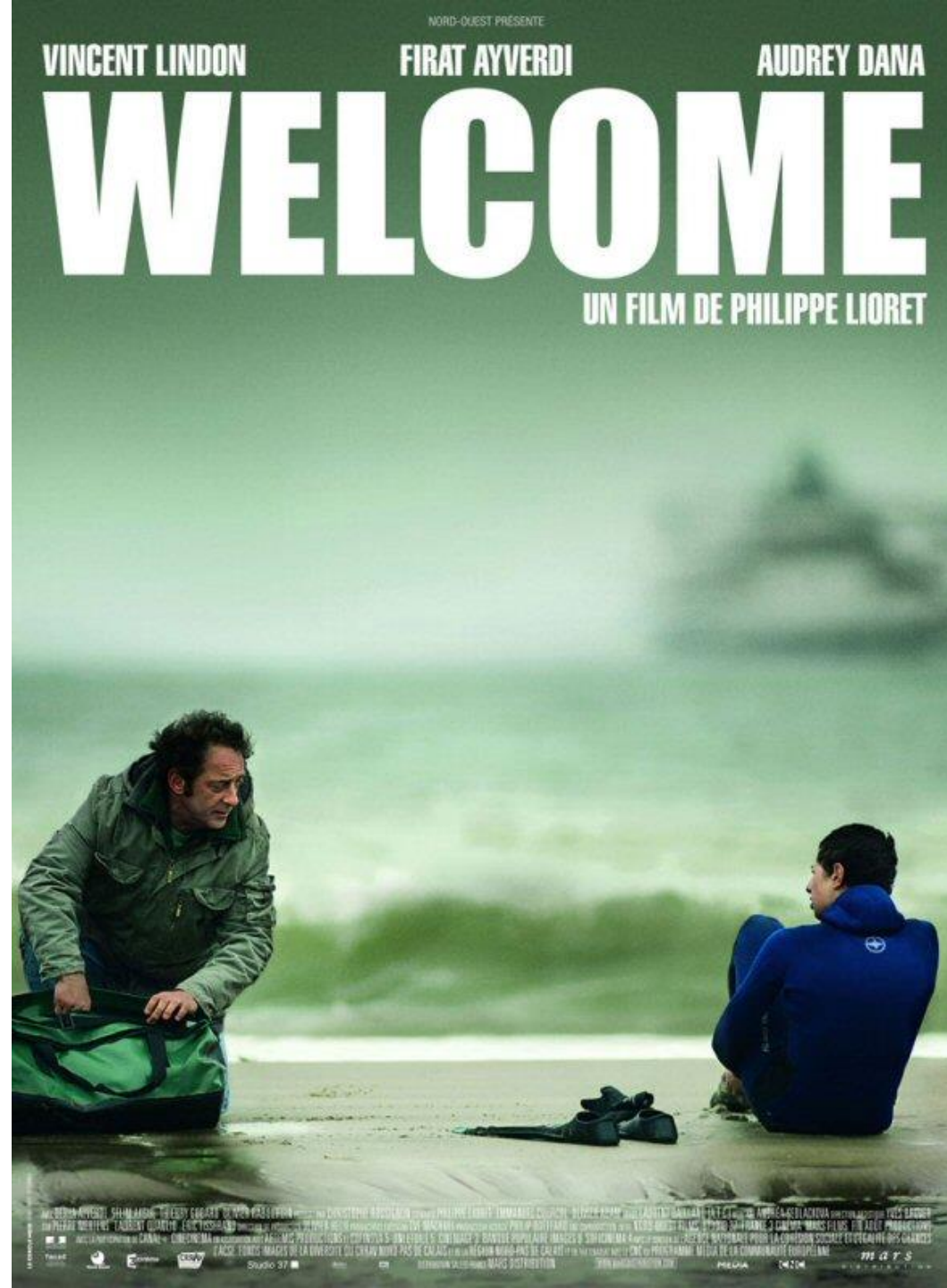
What is the question asking for;

- An idea about belonging? *Make sure that this is linked specifically to the text*
- An evaluation of how language or visual techniques shape meaning in a text? *Remember to clearly identify techniques and explain their effect*
- The unpacking of a concept? *Provide specific insights and supporting evidence*
- Evaluation or synthesis between texts?





- **Assumptions** about belonging that have shaped the representation.
- **Different perspectives** on belonging.
- **Synthesis** in final question





# Synthesis Question

- A range of questions could be asked:
  - **Evaluative** (*In your opinion, which text was most effective in conveying an idea about belonging?*)
  - **Comparison** (*How did two of the texts convey different ideas about belonging?*)
  - **Concept** (*How did two of the texts reflect the importance of landscape to belonging?*)
- Students need to write comprehensively (a page at the very minimum – two pages desirable).
- Discuss form and features of both texts supported by detailed references.
- They **MUST** address texts equally.

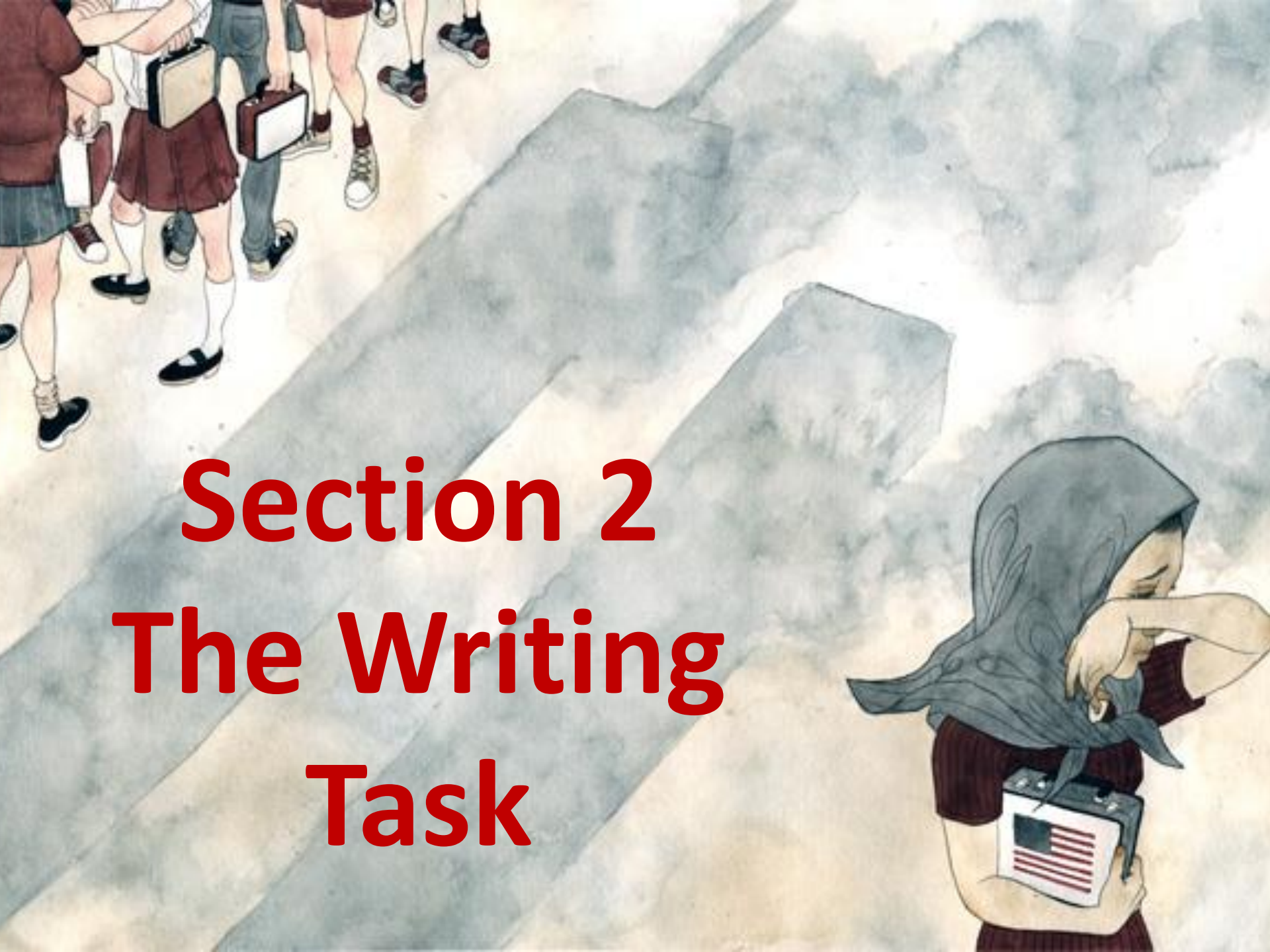
# Synthesis Question

- **CONCEPT** driven
- Line of argument or **THESIS** in first topic sentence.
- Mini-essay
- **INTEGRATE, COMPARE** texts within paragraphs.
- End with an **EVALUATIVE** statement.



# Section 2

## The Writing Task



# Imaginative Writing

- Writing is a craft that can be learned and transformed to become artistry!
- Explicitly focus on the craft and artistry!



# Notes from Marking Centre



- *'responses displayed **originality** and **artistry** and the **mechanics** of language were applied skilfully.'*
- *'They explored the ways relationships contribute to a sense of belonging with insight, **complexity and/or subtlety**. These responses displayed originality and **artistry** and the **mechanics of language were applied skilfully**.'*



*'Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint  
of light on broken glass' Anton Chekhov.*



- The art of the first and last lines!
- The details
- Setting – synaesthesia, colour, sounds...
- Verbal cinema





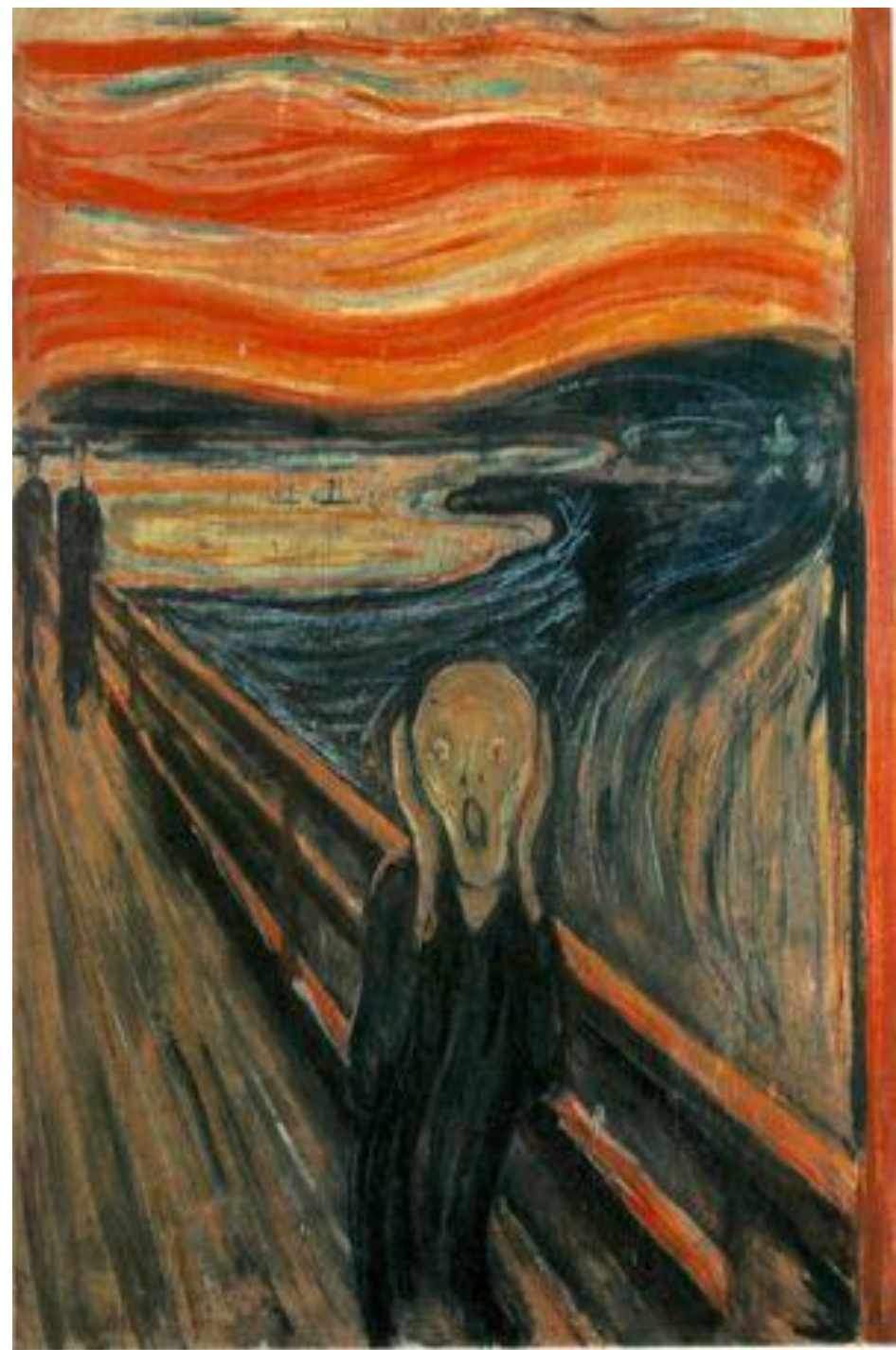
# Artistry

- **Voice:**
  - Writing from experience
  - Conviction
  - Word choice
- **Subtlety:**
  - Tension
  - Ambivalence
- **Structure:**
  - Cyclical
  - Flash back
  - A fragment



# Artistry

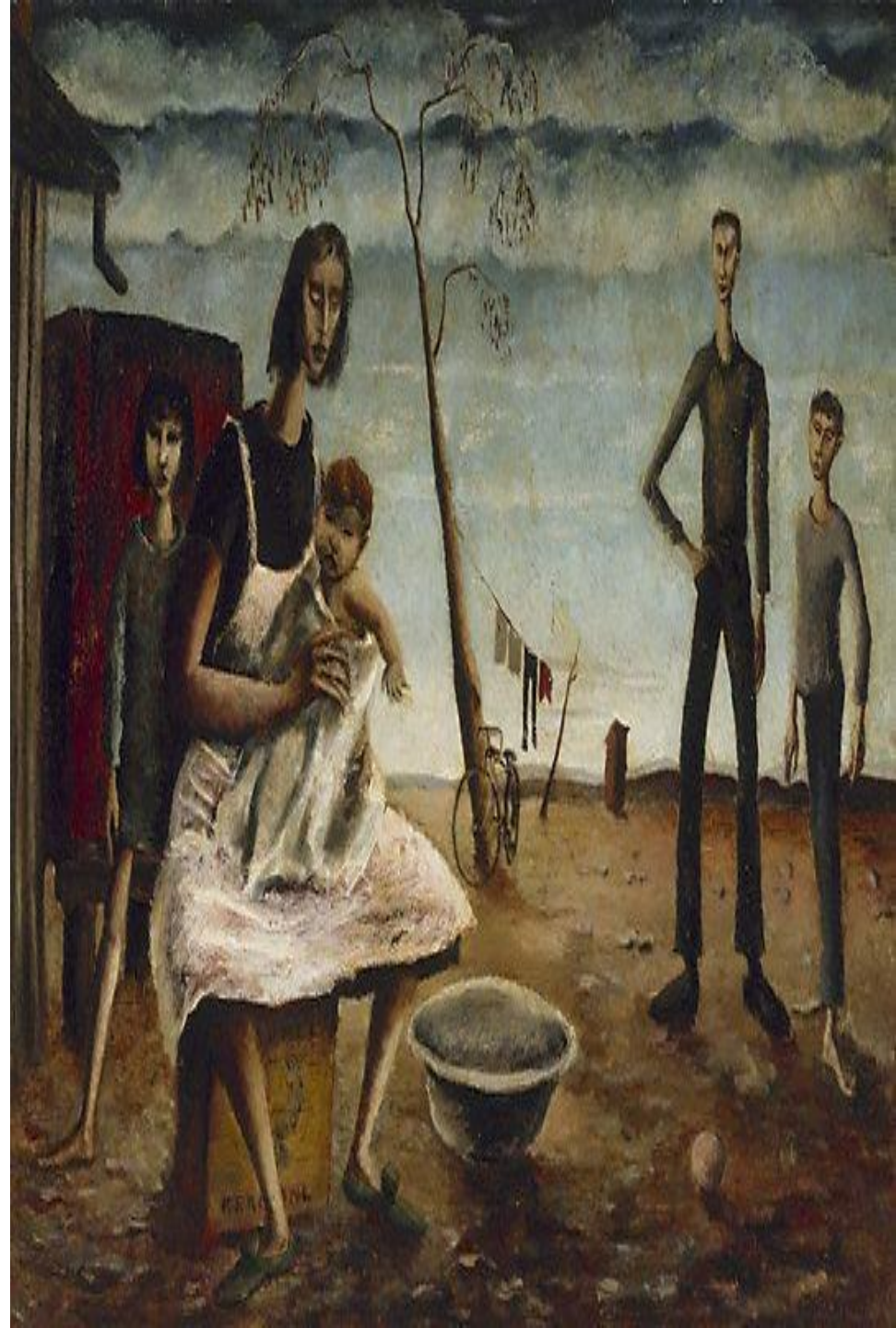
- **Mechanics:**
  - Syntax: varying length and beginnings
  - Lexical density
  - Imagery: figurative devices/synaesthesia
  - Sound: euphony, discordance, disruption
  - Verbs not adjectivous



“This sentence has five words. Here are five more words. Five-word sentences are fine. But several together become monotonous. Listen to what is happening. The writing is getting boring. The sound of it drones. It’s like a stuck record. The ear demands some variety. Now listen. I vary the sentence length, and I create music. Music. The writing sings. It has a pleasant rhythm, a lilt, a harmony. I use short sentences. And I use sentences of medium length. And sometimes, when I am certain the reader is rested, I will engage him with a sentence of considerable length, a sentence that burns with energy and builds with all the impetus of a crescendo, the roll of the drums, the crash of the cymbals—sounds that say listen to this, it is important” Gary Provost.

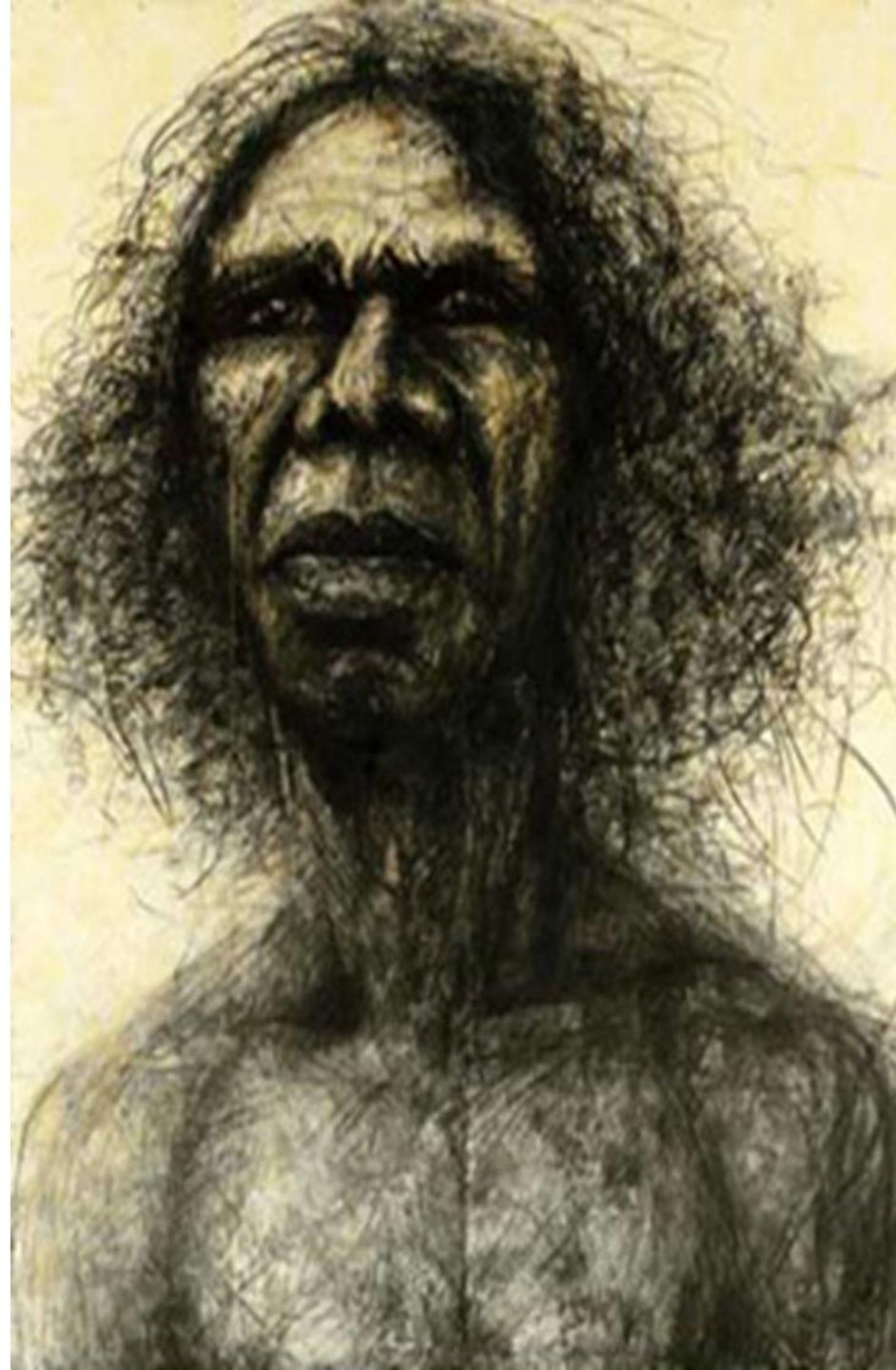
# Characterisation

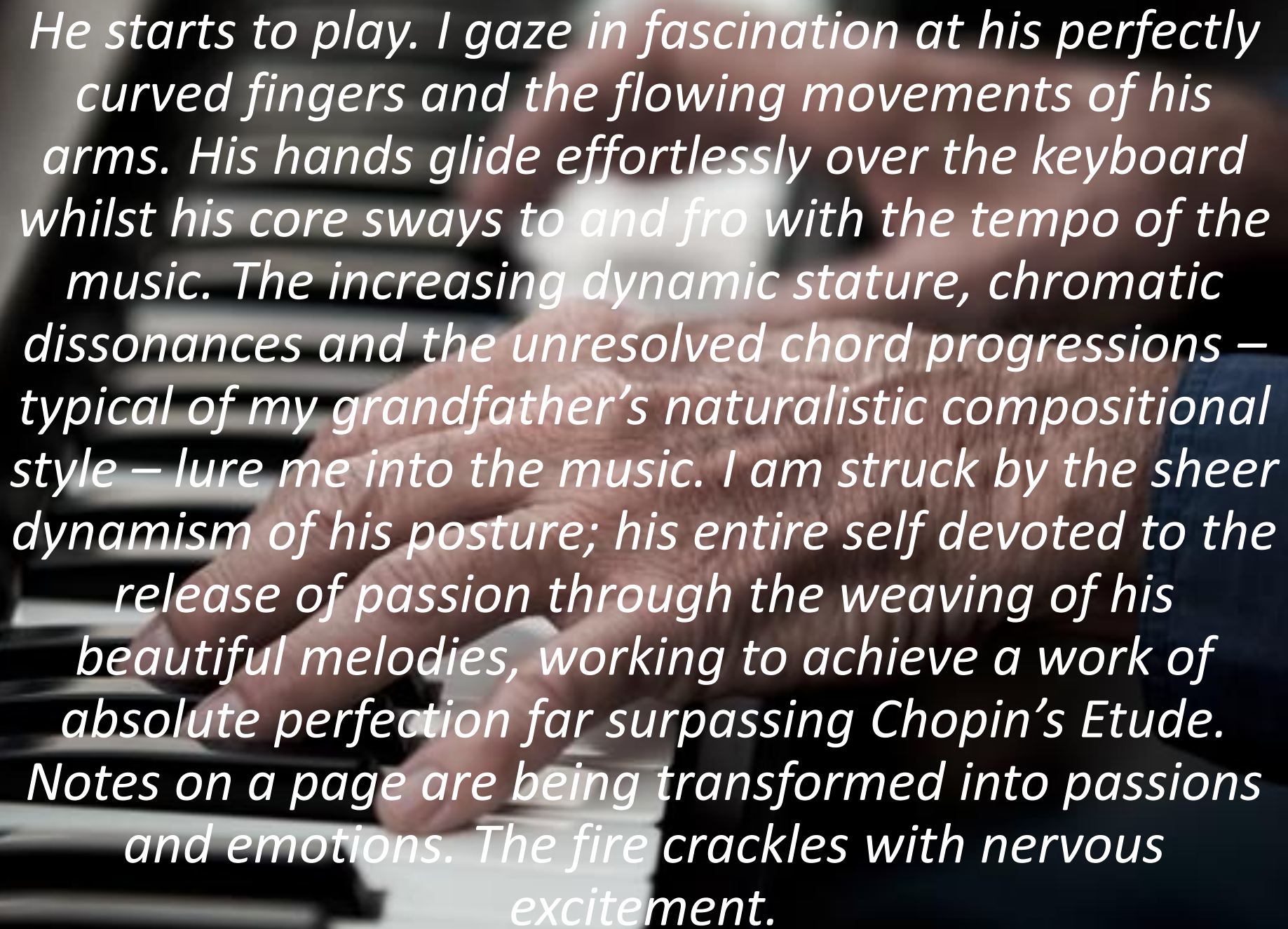
- Idiosyncrasies
- Complexity
- Perspectives
- Smells or scents could be associated with the character, such as the smell of tobacco or lavender
- How they move and act in the setting
- Relationships
- Actions and consequences



# Characterisation

- Objects, such as a trophy, an old black and white photograph or a leather band around a wrist
- Dialogue and voice
- Back story

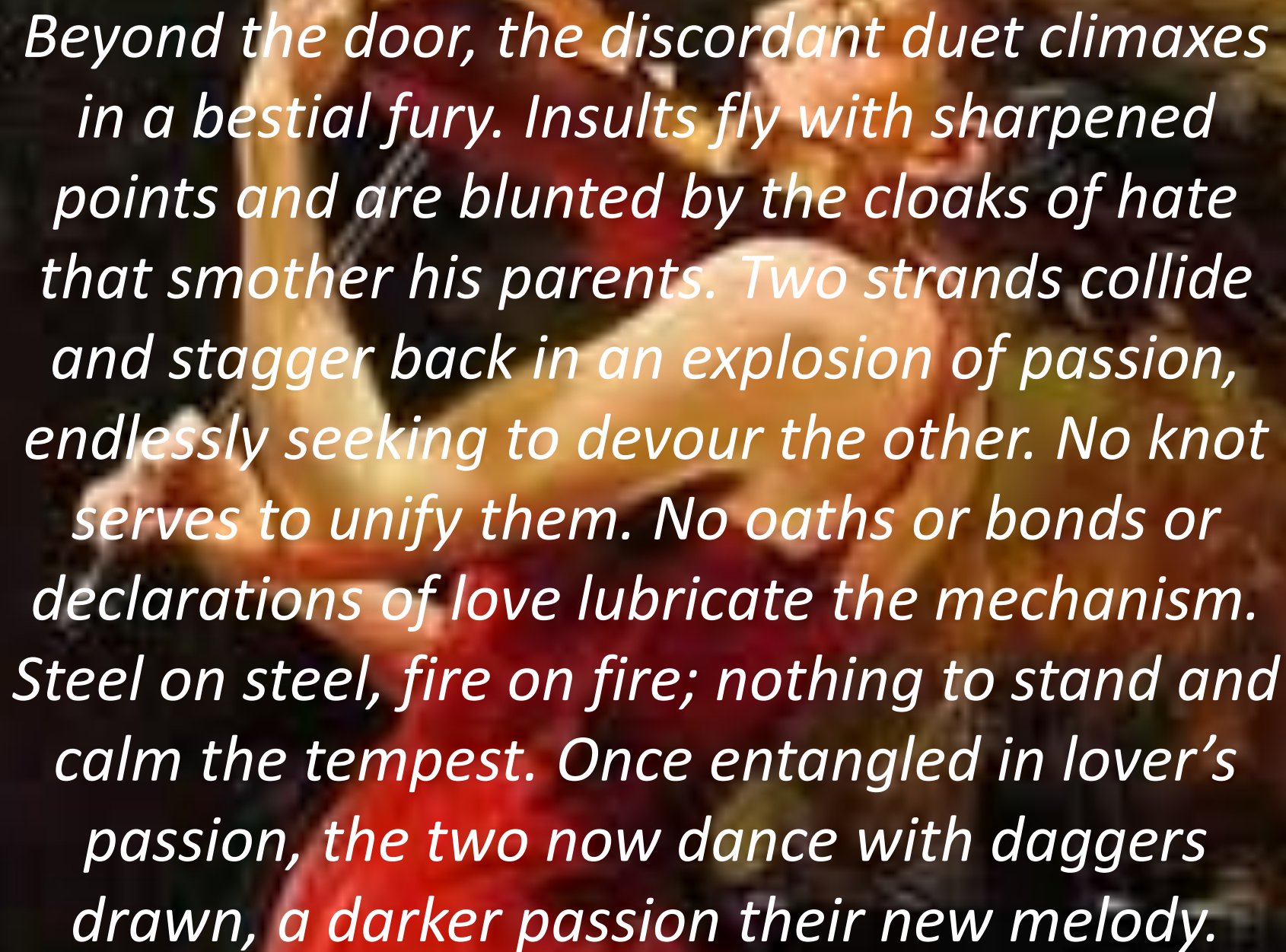




*He starts to play. I gaze in fascination at his perfectly curved fingers and the flowing movements of his arms. His hands glide effortlessly over the keyboard whilst his core sways to and fro with the tempo of the music. The increasing dynamic stature, chromatic dissonances and the unresolved chord progressions – typical of my grandfather's naturalistic compositional style – lure me into the music. I am struck by the sheer dynamism of his posture; his entire self devoted to the release of passion through the weaving of his beautiful melodies, working to achieve a work of absolute perfection far surpassing Chopin's Etude. Notes on a page are being transformed into passions and emotions. The fire crackles with nervous excitement.*



*There's a nothingness on the horizon that watches and waits. Nothing. I turn around and look back at the empty beach. There is no other place I want to be. I see a set coming. Digging deep into the ocean I gain speed and push my way onto the wave. A great force pushes me on and on. A huge rush of adrenalin kicks in as I stand up and fly down the glassy face. For that split second nothing else matters. No thoughts in my mind about school or my future or anything. All that matters is here on this wave. I don't care what will come next...*



*Beyond the door, the discordant duet climaxes in a bestial fury. Insults fly with sharpened points and are blunted by the cloaks of hate that smother his parents. Two strands collide and stagger back in an explosion of passion, endlessly seeking to devour the other. No knot serves to unify them. No oaths or bonds or declarations of love lubricate the mechanism. Steel on steel, fire on fire; nothing to stand and calm the tempest. Once entangled in lover's passion, the two now dance with daggers drawn, a darker passion their new melody.*



# An approach

- Think of a memory from your own past, or a story that you have been told by someone who is important to you.
- Reduce this memory down to a single moment in time – isolate the most important part of the memory.
- Create a motif, or a recurring image for your memory. Consider what it represents about your memory: a mirror, locket, refrain from a song... The motif should represent a climax in your plot – a moment of truth or a central action.
- Flashbacks: Movement between childhood memories and the present.
- The story behind what is broken or missing...the missing leg of a teddy bear, the head that has been cut from a photo, an empty photo frame...

# Activities

- Flash fiction – 50 words with a motif and key idea
- Recording writing
- 12 word stories
- A newspaper headline or recent event
- Haiku





# Section 3

# Critical Response

The texts of your own choosing  
become the discriminators for your  
response.



# HSC Examination Rubrics

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of the **concept** of belonging in the context of your study
- analyse, explain and assess the ways belonging is **represented** in a variety of texts
- organise, develop and express **ideas** using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

## Section III: Extended Response

- Must demonstrate understanding of key concepts and ideas of belonging from the rubrics and through the response to the texts
- Develop theses or lines of argument
- Choose texts that connect with concepts



# Notes from the Marking Centre

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NEW SOUTH WALES

- *'Candidates who clearly understood the purpose of their texts were able to demonstrate **conceptual understanding** and respond personally.'*
- *'High-range responses ... displayed an ability to **evaluate** and **analyse**.'*
- *'an **insightful thesis**, which was **sustained** throughout the response through a **discerning** selection of textual detail... skilful integration of the analysis of both texts into the **conceptual framework** of their response was a distinguishing feature of highly developed responses. These responses were also marked by clear and purposeful control of language, with a **judicious** use of **related material**.'*

# Extended Responses

- **Conceptual understanding:**
  - The thesis or line of argument
  - In response to the question
  - The framework and drivers for extended responses
  - Integrates the response
  - Support and challenge



# Developing a Thesis

- Strong opening paragraph that introduces a clear line of argument or thesis that directly addresses the question.
- A response that is driven by a thesis connected to the question. Each successive point must further the thesis through textual analysis and support. Support or even challenge then thesis through the analysis of the text/s.
- Precise topic sentences that are connected to and build on the thesis.

# Theses

- Overarching through the question to specific lines of arguments.
- Supporting the thesis with the reasons why the student has arrived at this point of view.
- At least two – three supporting arguments or mini-theses used to further the thesis that addresses the question in the essay.
- Body of essay: First half the first idea and second half second idea.

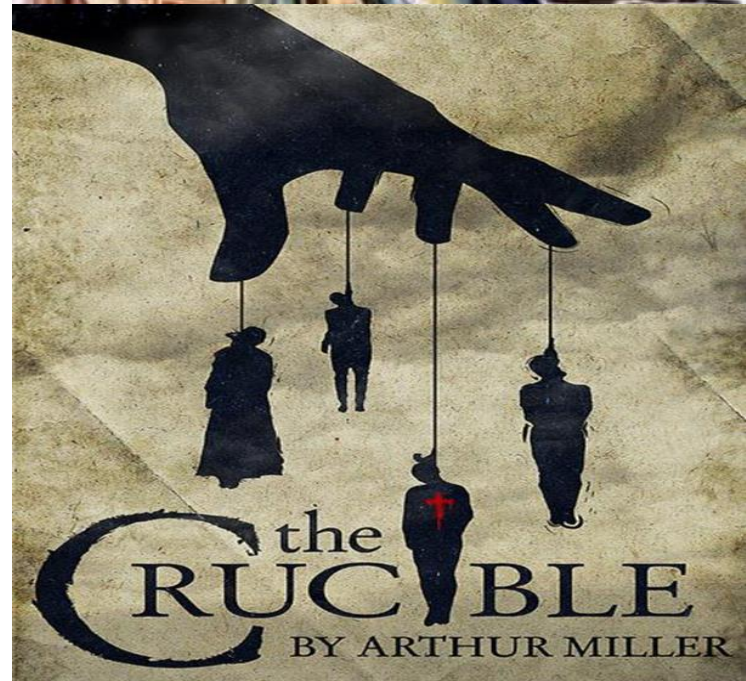


# Developing a Thesis

- Judicious textual support: Detailed, relevant examples from the text/s rather than spurious, shallow examples.
- Supporting the analysis of language features with examples from the text/s and evaluating their impact on the responder. Never a shopping list of techniques!
- Begin with the idea, move to the textual detail and then analyse the language features and the meaning conveyed.

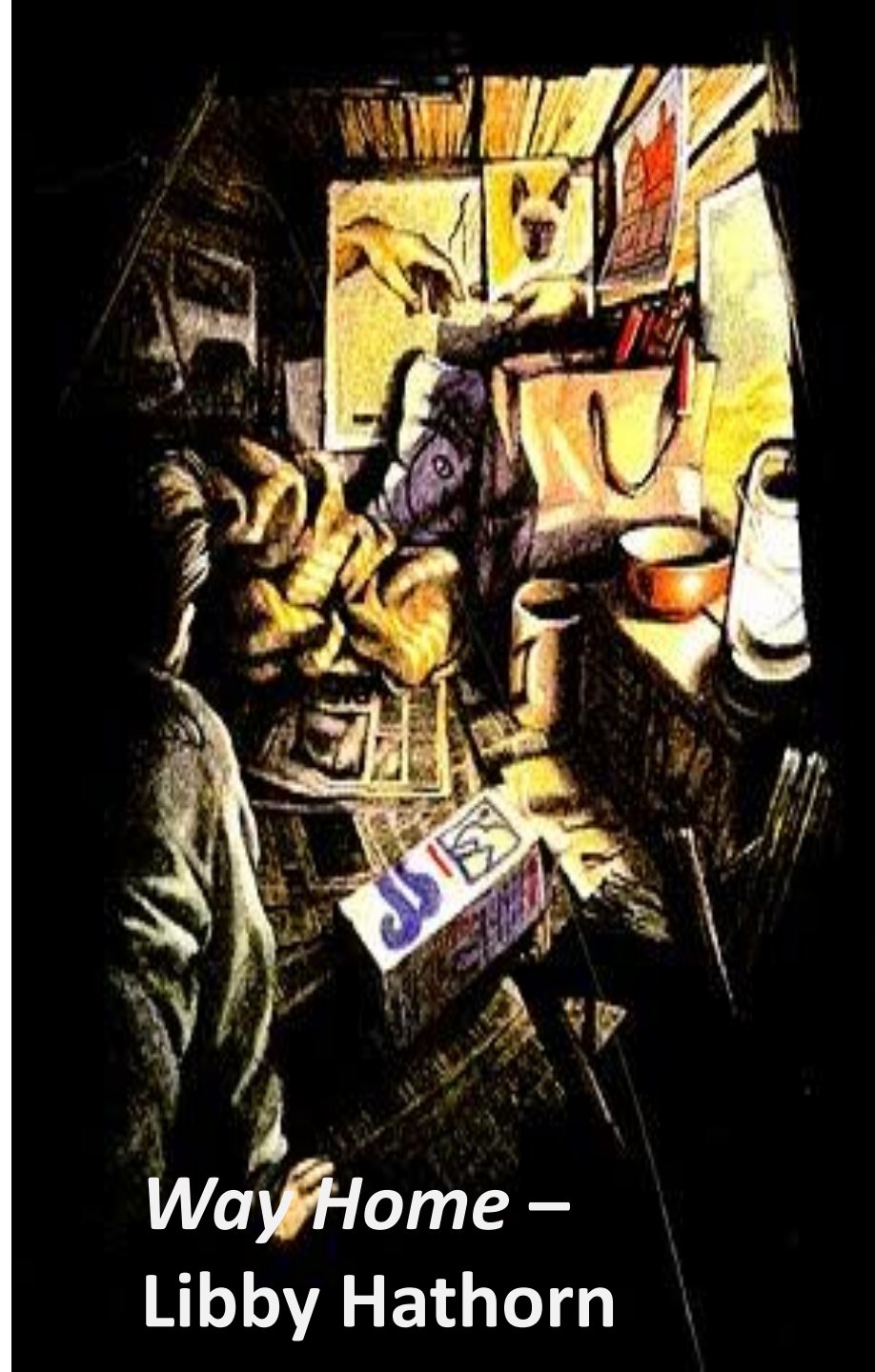
# Language

- Connecting words:  
*Furthermore, alternatively, moreover, in contrast, affirmed, is analogous to...*
- The verbs: convey, proffer, promulgate, ascribes, advances, validates, substantiates, challenges, posits...



# Texts of own Choosing

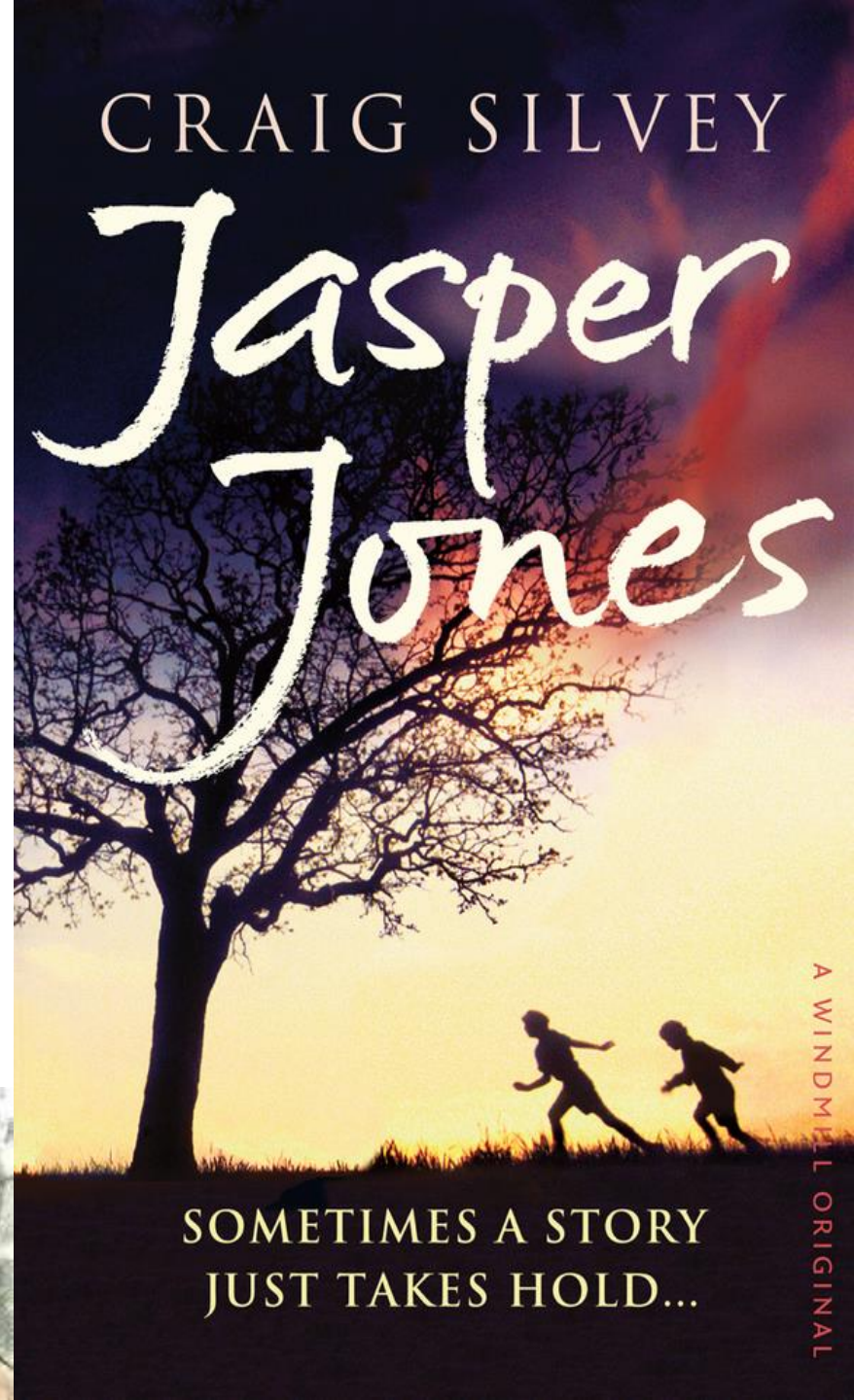
- Discerning choice of related material that enhance and strengthen the argument through subtle comparison or stark contrast.
- Enable the student to support and challenge the theses or lines of argument
- The discriminator!!



*Way Home* –  
Libby Hathorn

# Related Texts

- 'Song for an Exile in Australia' and 'Alien' - by Yu Ouyang
- 'Despair' & 'Scream' – Edvard Munch
- 'Love, Honour and Pity', *The Boat* - Nam Le
- *Social Network*
- *Donny Darko*
- *The Catcher in the Rye*



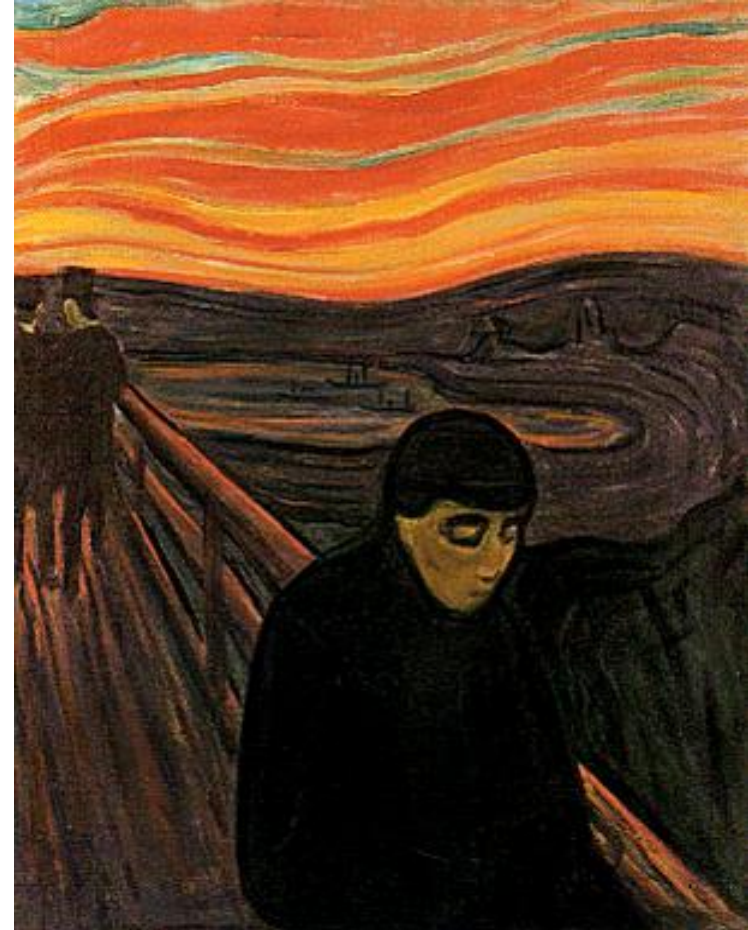
# Related Texts

- Robert Gray's poetry:  
'Journey the North Coast',  
'Diptych', 'The Meatworks'
- Archie Roach's songs and  
poetry: 'Took the Children  
Away'...racial barriers
- *Whale Rider*
- *A Beautiful Mind*
- *One Night the Moon*
- *Beneath Clouds*
- *Apocalypse Now*



# Related Texts

- 'Despair' & 'Scream' – Edvard Munch
- *Namatjira* - Scott Rankin
- *The Life Of Pi* – Yann Martel
- *Secret Lives of Others*
- *Skin*
- 'Vincent' – Don Maclean
- *Slum Dog Millionaire*
- *Persepolis*





- Tropfest: *The Unspoken*, *Be My Brother*, [\*Lullaby\*](#), *Missing Her*, *Mankind is no Island*
- Omar Musa,  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u8dz50GbVk> 'My Generation'
- Sarah Kay, [\*For my Daughter\*](#)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sSfbQk7DxE>

Feelings of belonging are constantly changing due to societal pressures and expectations. Some individuals choose to change personally to conform and belong or to stand alone. This concept of belonging is conveyed through the representations of people and their relationships with others and the larger world in the play *The Crucible* and the film *Social Network*. Strong individuals choose not to belong to a society to preserve their individual and professional identity, and this can either enrich or challenge the values of a community or group.

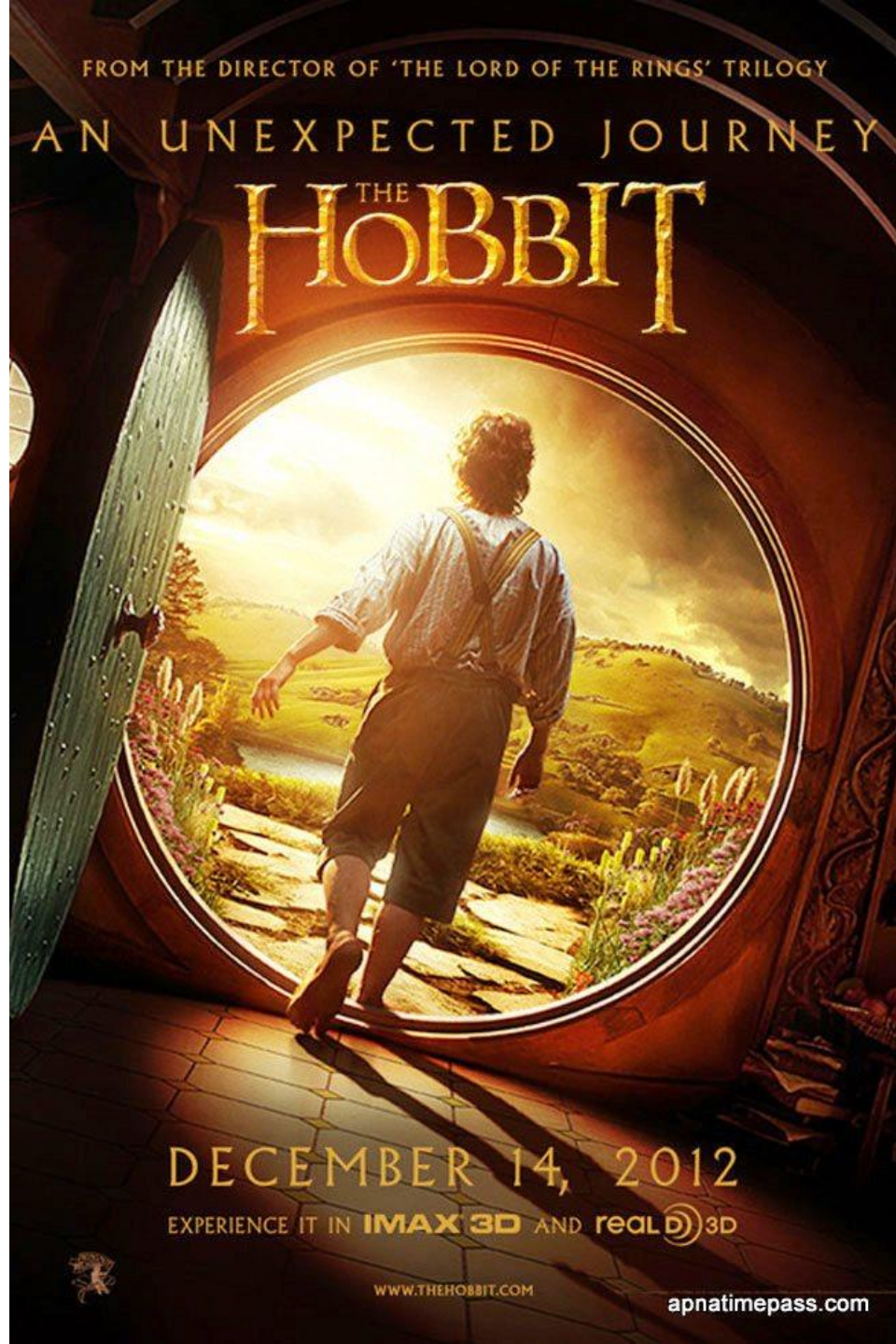
# Strategies

- 60-second presentations about the most significant concept
- Suite of poetry
- Hot-seating characters' perceptions of belonging
- Learning objects



# Discovery

- Discovery through texts
- Assumptions underlying various representations of the concept of discovery
- Discovery is conveyed through the representations of people, relationships, societies, places, events and ideas
- Understanding of themselves and their world



# Discovery

- Self
- Humanity
- Places
- Cultures
- Family
- Values
- Beliefs





# **Module A**

## **Experience through language**

# Distinctively Visual



# Feedback from the Marking Centre

- Weaker responses often relied on recount.
- Candidates who made their own selection of related texts usually provided a more genuine and personal response, rather than a common or generic response.
- Better responses demonstrated high levels of visual literacy.



# Visual

- How texts evoke images that we see and imagine
- How the visuals construct and convey meaning



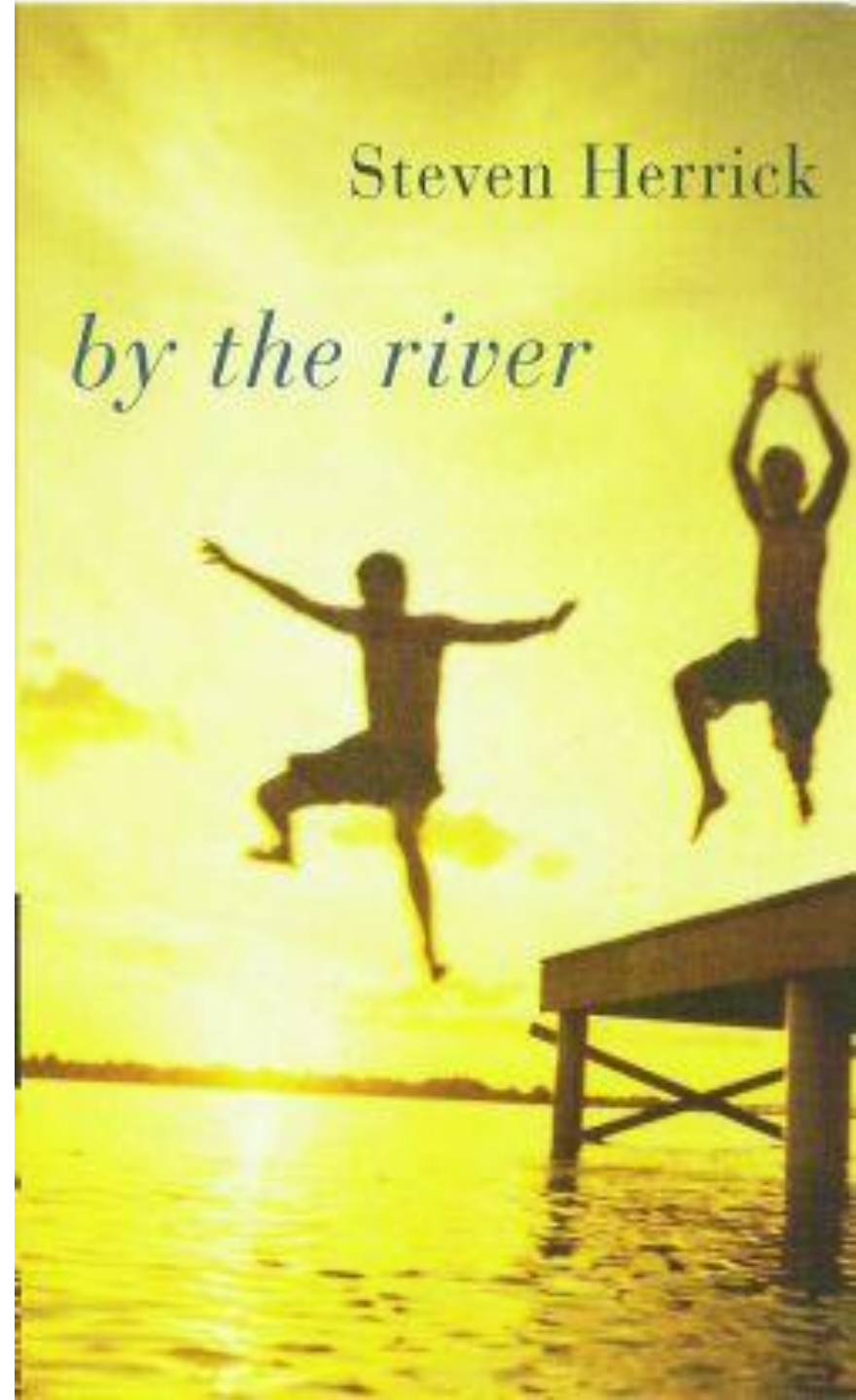
# Lawson

- Place defines and shapes us
- Harsh, vast and dry
- Isolated and dangerous
- Water offering life and renewal



# ***By the River***

- Steven Herrick's verse novel
- *Brown*  
*was dry grass all summer,*  
*a dead snake,*  
*cane toads squashed flat,*  
*our house smeared in oil;*  
*nothing that lives,*  
*nothing that shines.*



# Films

- *No Country for Old Men*
- *True Grit*
- *The Road*
- *The Life of Pi*
- Australian Screen:  
film clips:  
<http://aso.gov.au/titles/alpha/A/>



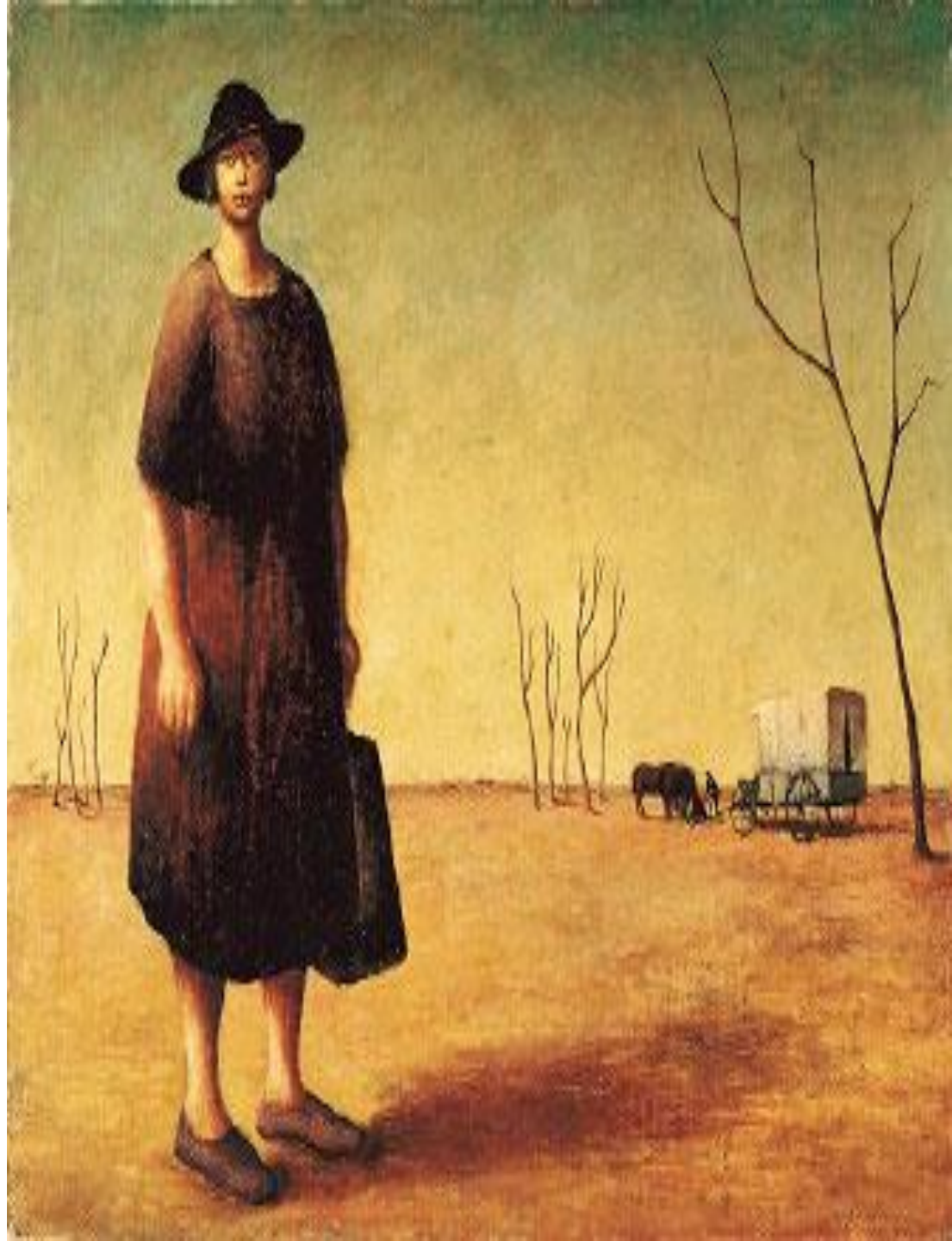
# Songs

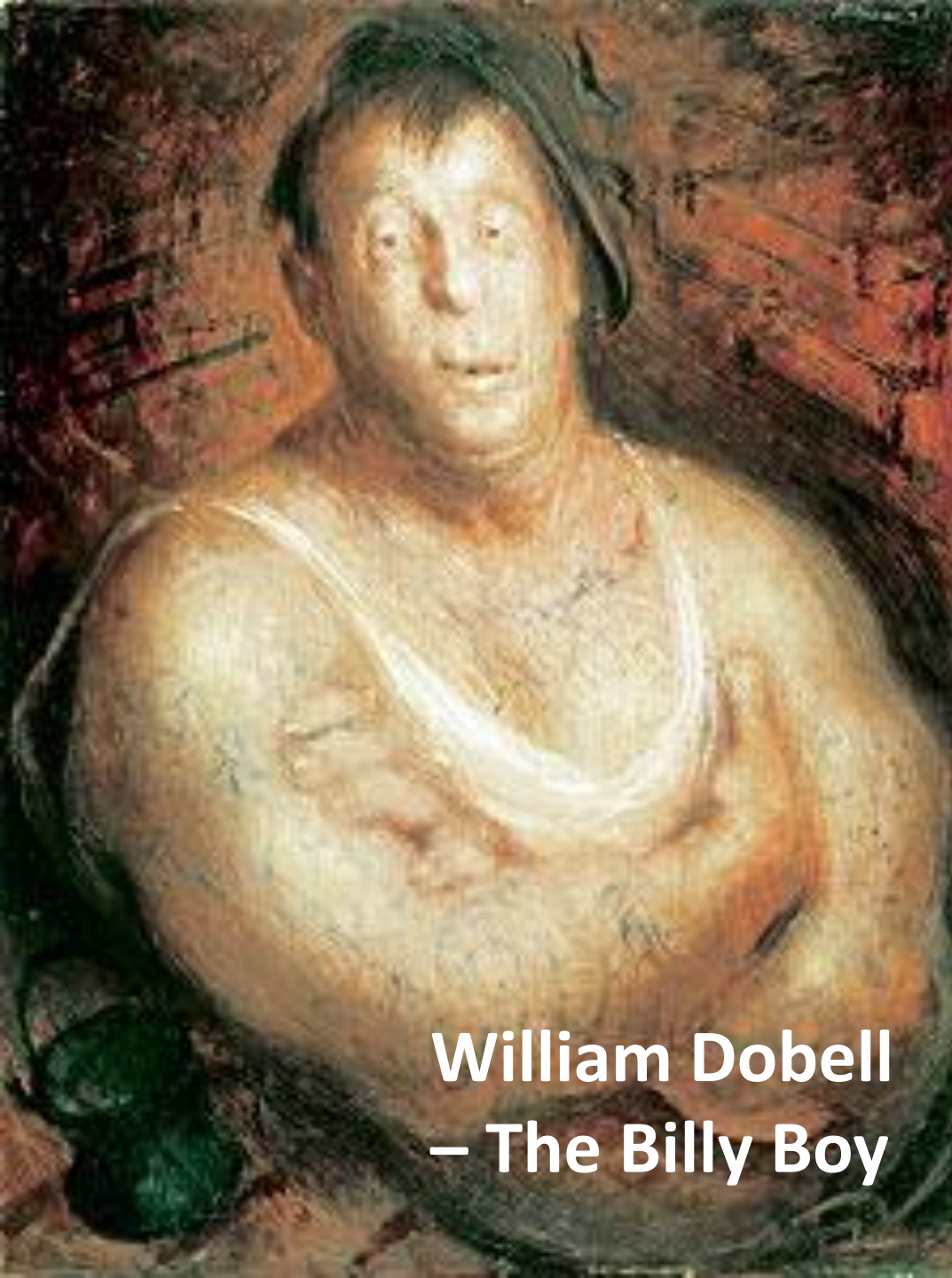
- 'Sounds of then' -  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSxnvQeqnsE> – gangajang
- 'Droving Woman' – Paul Kelly -  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fm27zZ4psw&feature=fvsr>



# People

- Stoic, courageous and strong
- Resilient and feisty women
- Accepting and convivial men





**William Dobell  
– The Billy Boy**



**Sydney Nolan –  
Ned Kelly**



Fredrick  
McCubbin

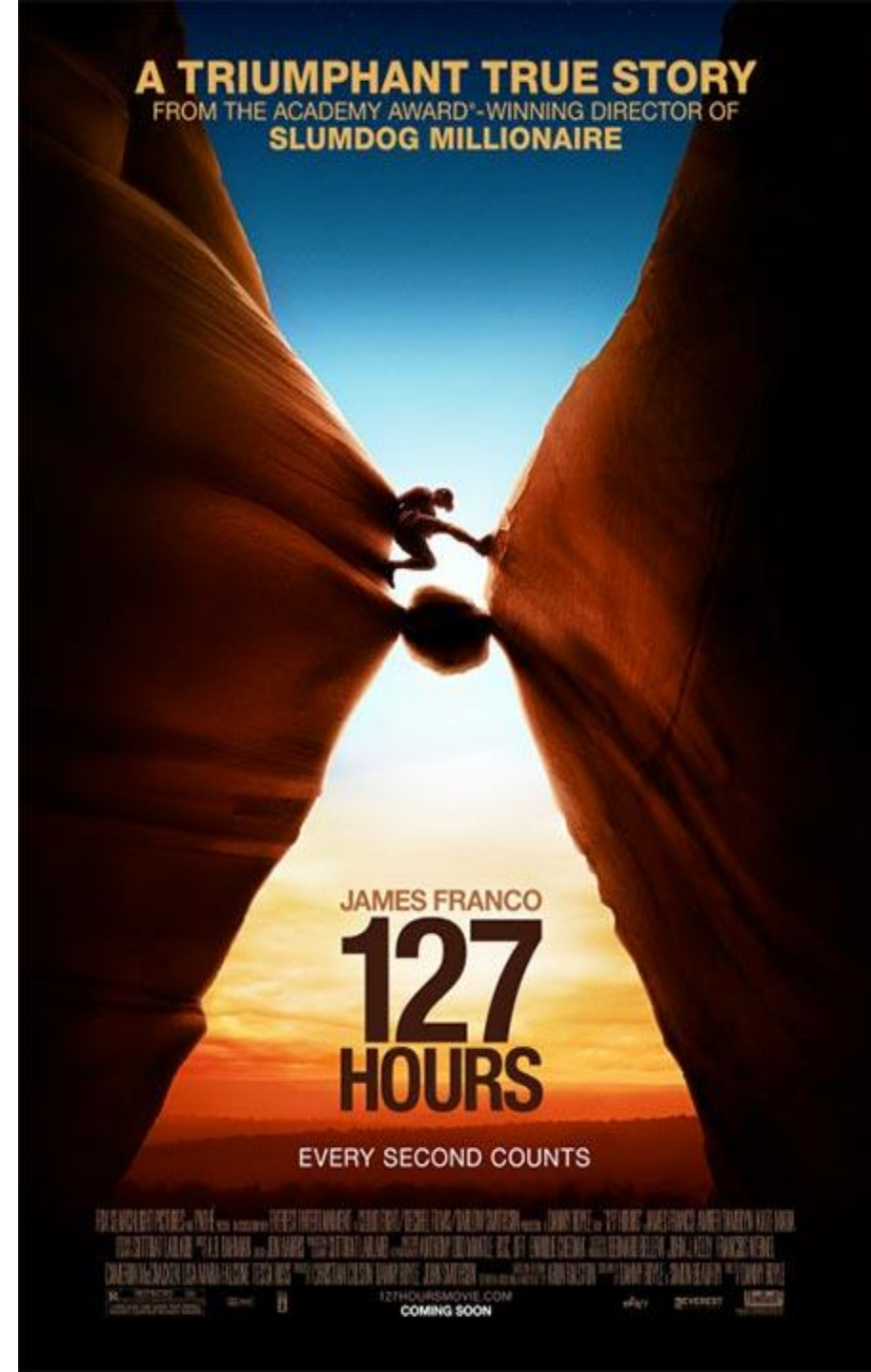




Charles Blackman

# Films

- *Of Mice And Men*
- *To Kill a Mocking Bird*
- *O Brother Where Art Thou*
- *127 Hours*
- *Yolongu Boy*
- *Storm Boy*



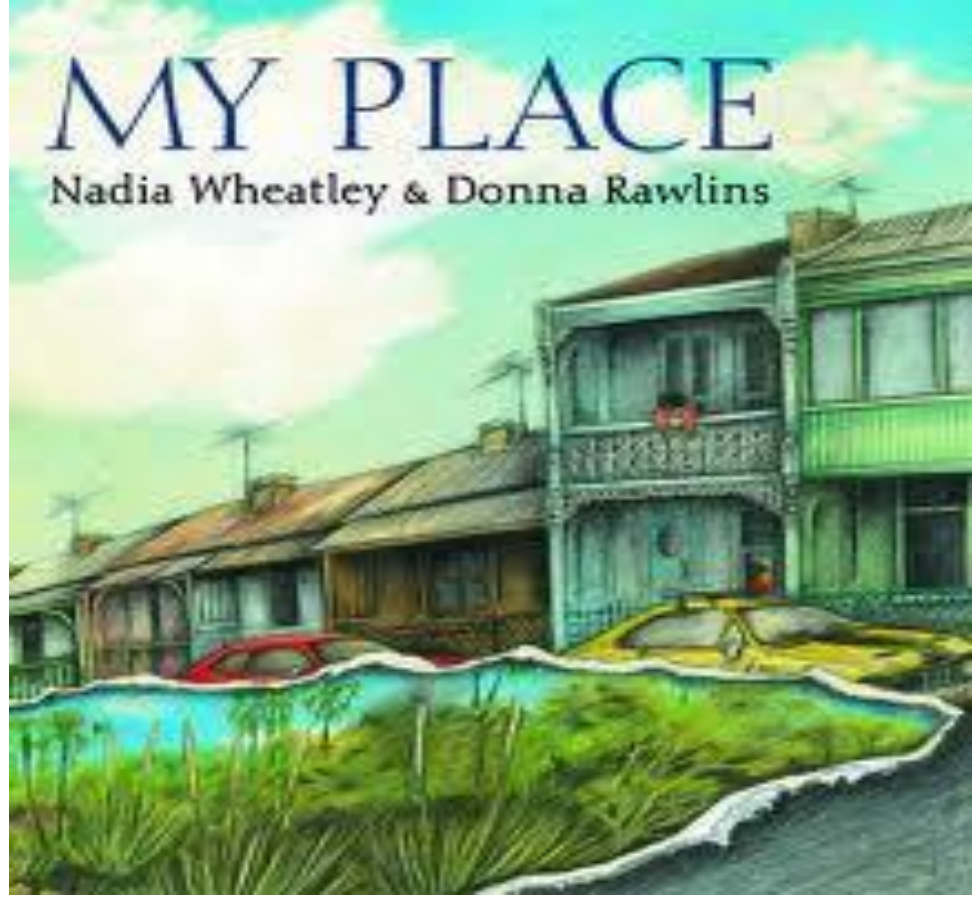
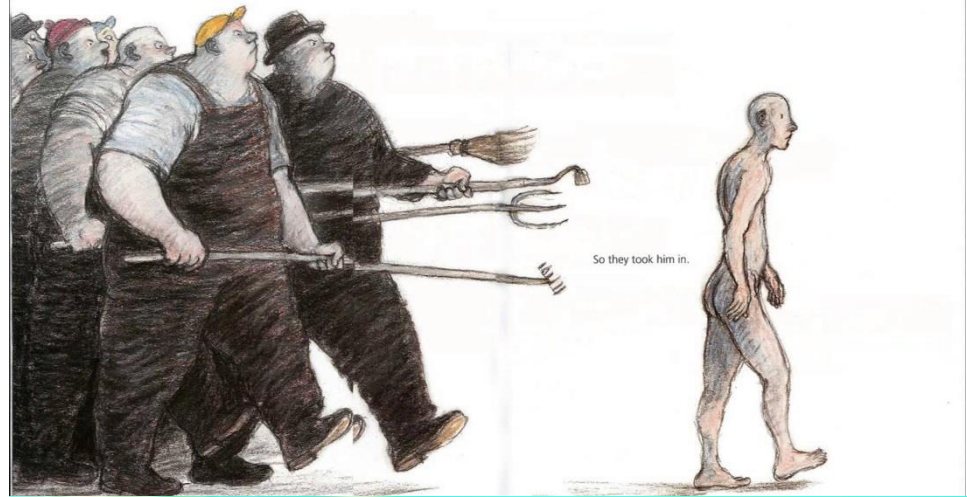
# Songs

- 'On Raglan Road' – Sinead O'Connor - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6zqb3gf5aA&feature=related>
- 'Streets of London' – Ralph McTell - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiWomXklfv8&feature=related>

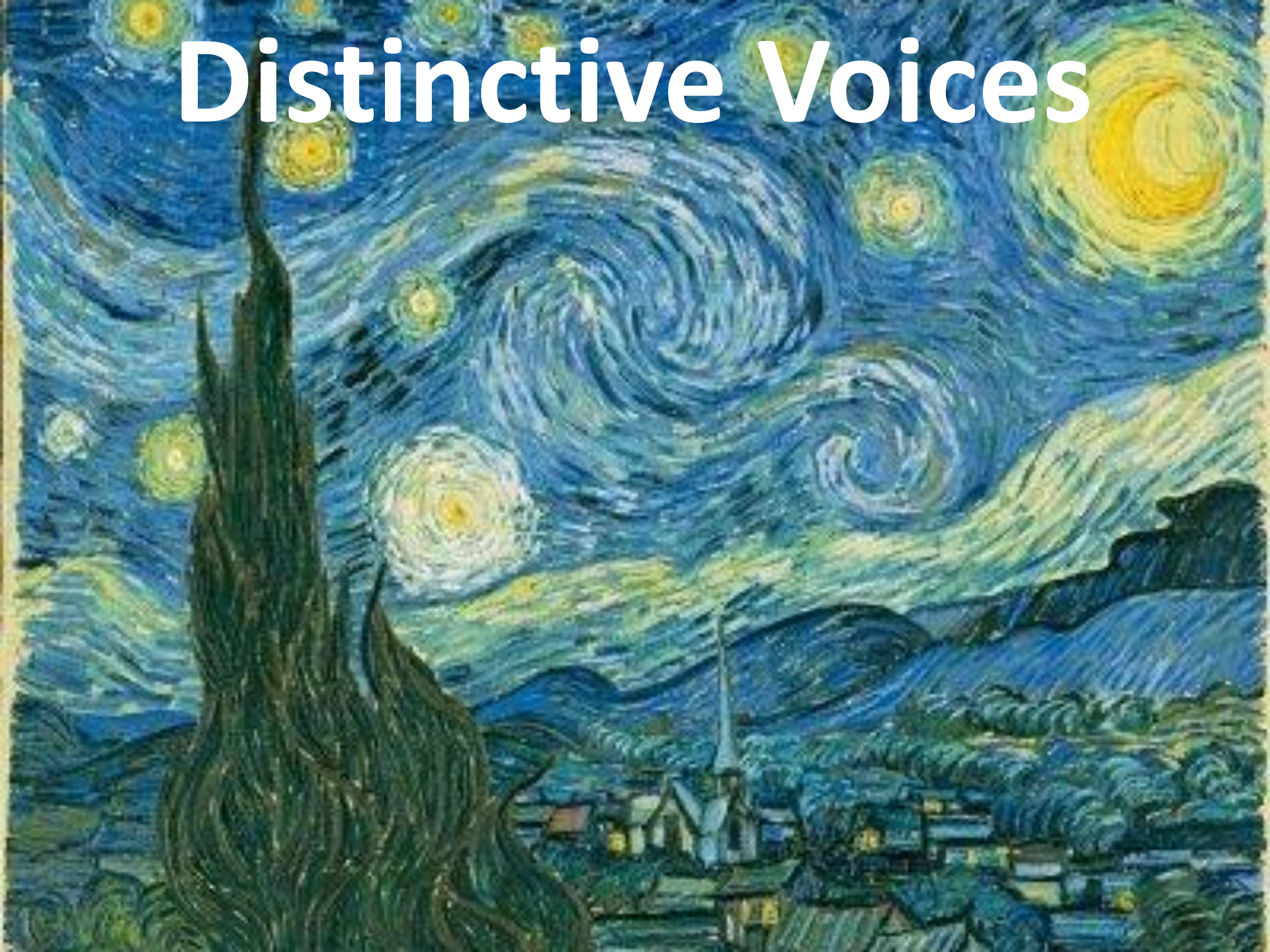


# Picture Books

- *The Island* – Greder
- *The Arrival* – Tan
- *The Red Tree* – Tan
- *Papunya School Book*
- *Now Let Me Fly* – Dolores Johnson
- *My Place* – Nadia Wheatley & Donna Rawlins



# Distinctive Voices



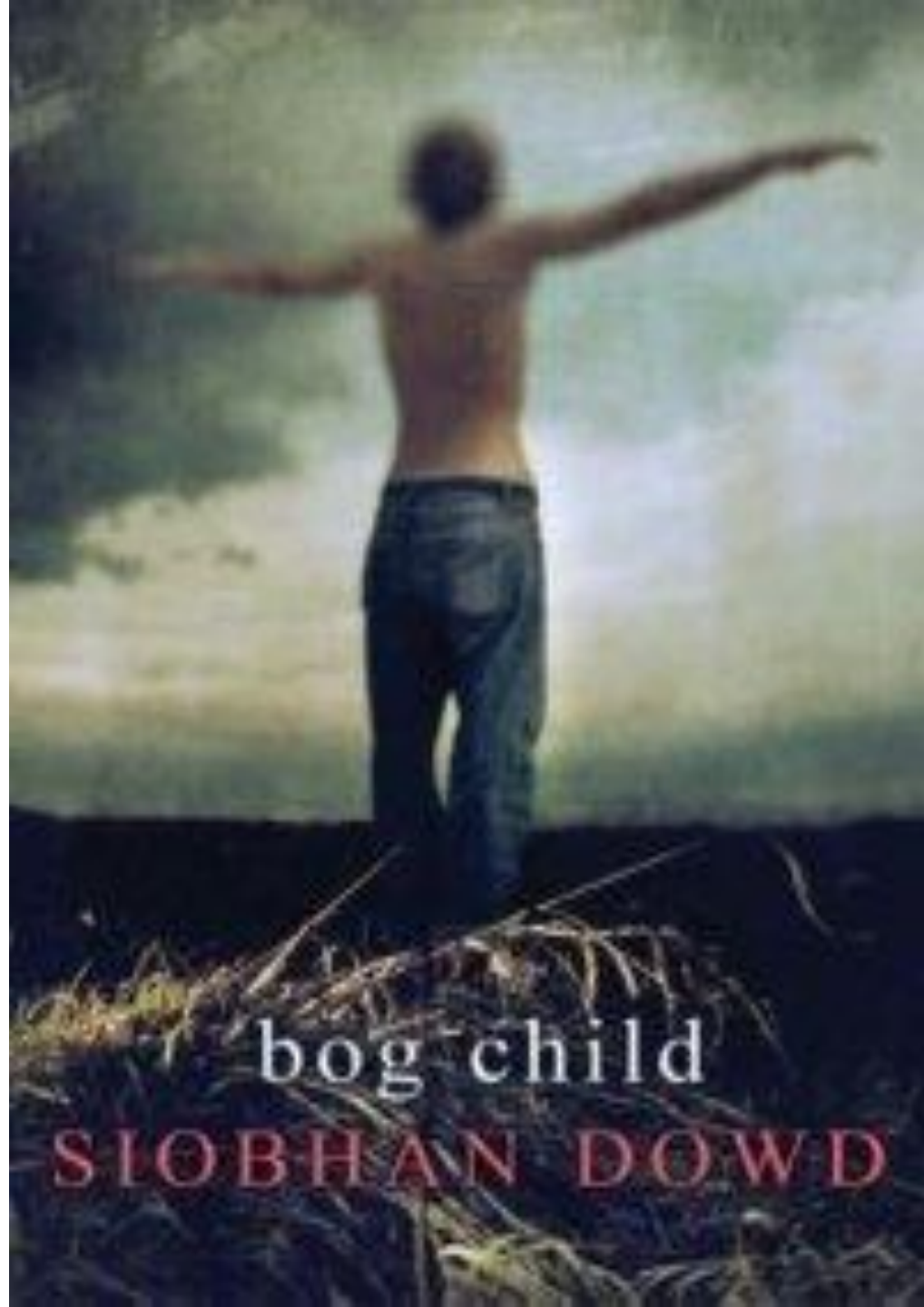
# Voices

- How a composer creates a voice
- How the voice is used to achieve the composer's purpose, convey the key ideas and evoke an emotive response



# Voice

- Person
- Omniscient narrator
- Stream of consciousness
- Dialogue
- Word choice
- Imagery
- Tone
- Sentence construction
- Gaps and silences



# A.B Paterson

- Romantic and idealistic
- Narrative voice
- Idioms and slang
- Humour
- Gaps and silences
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Visceral imagery



# Related texts

- *Yolngu Boy*
- *To Kill a Mocking Bird* – Harper Lee
- Maya Angelou '[And I still rise](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqo50LSZ04)' -  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqo50LSZ04>
- *Red Dog*
- *The Dish*
- Archie Roach
- Oodgeroo Noonuccal
- *One Night the Moon*



# Harry Lavender

- Claudia: feminist hard boiled detectives – harsh imagery and cynical tone
- Harry: crime boss who is sophisticated, arrogant and confident – poetic imagery
- City of Sydney
- Narrative voice
- Imagery
- Colloquial language
- Minimalist dialogue



# Related Texts

- *Sin City*
- *Max Payne*
- Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds – [Murder Ballads](#)
- *Breaking Bad*
- *No Country for Old Men*
- *Cold Skin* - Steven Herrick
- 'A Twist of Noir':  
<http://a-twist-of-noir.blogspot.com/>



# Close Study of Text

**GAS!**

**Quick,  
boys!**

An ecstasy  
of fumbling,  
Fitting the  
clumsy  
helmets  
just  
in time;



# Module B: Close Study of Texts

- Sense of **personal engagement** with the text
- Explores understanding of **ideas, forms** and **language** in a text interact and affect the responder (distinctive qualities)
- Engage with question and focus on **detailed textual knowledge**.



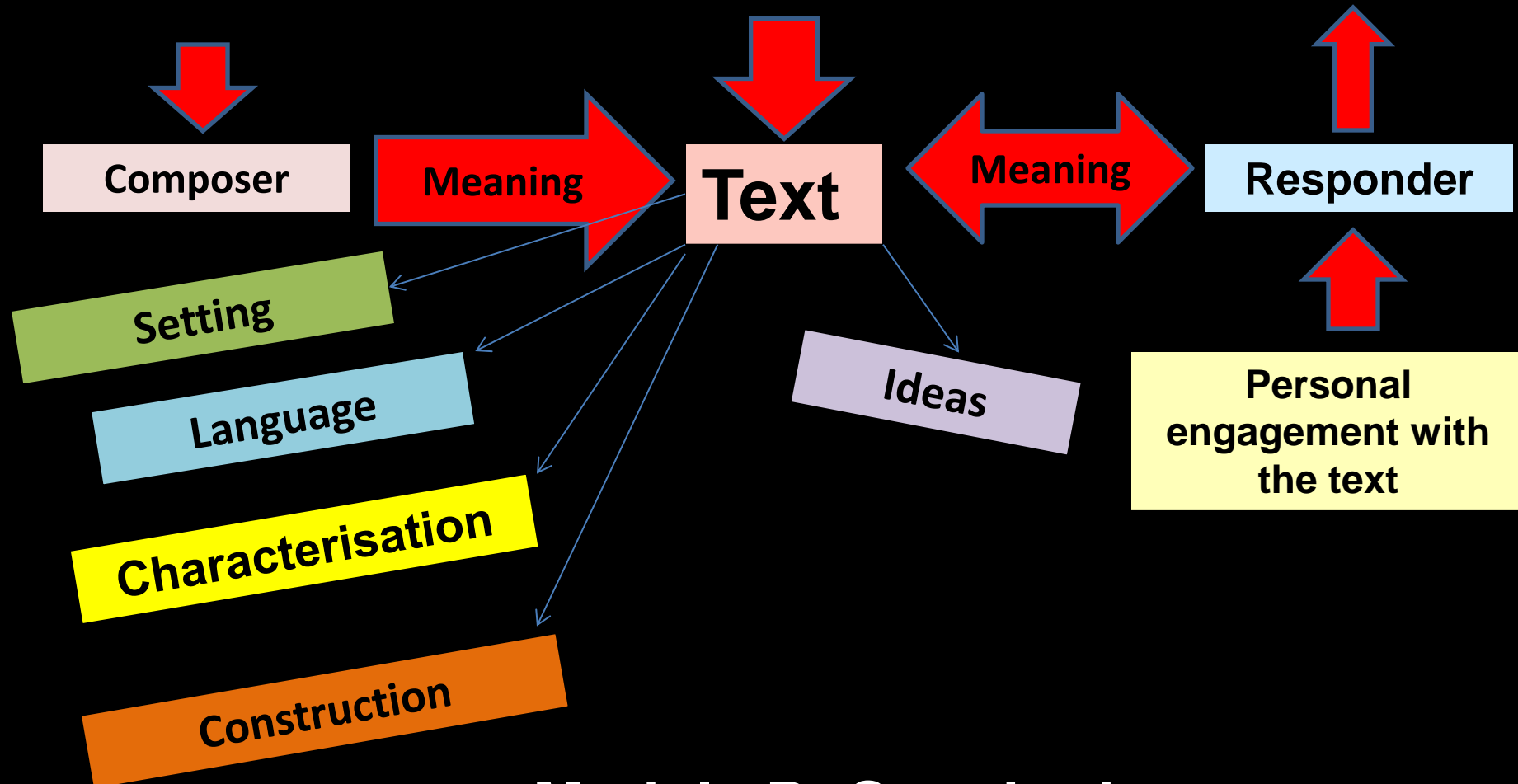
# The Concepts

- **Engagement:** sense of personal engagement.
- **Distinctive qualities:** ideas, forms and language in a text interact.
- **Characterisation:** Crafting of a character through language.
- **Construction/Textuality:** Form, structure and language.

**Context:**

**Distinctive  
Qualities:** ideas,  
forms and language  
in a text interact.

**Detailed  
textual  
references:**  
How meaning  
is shaped



**Module B: Standard**

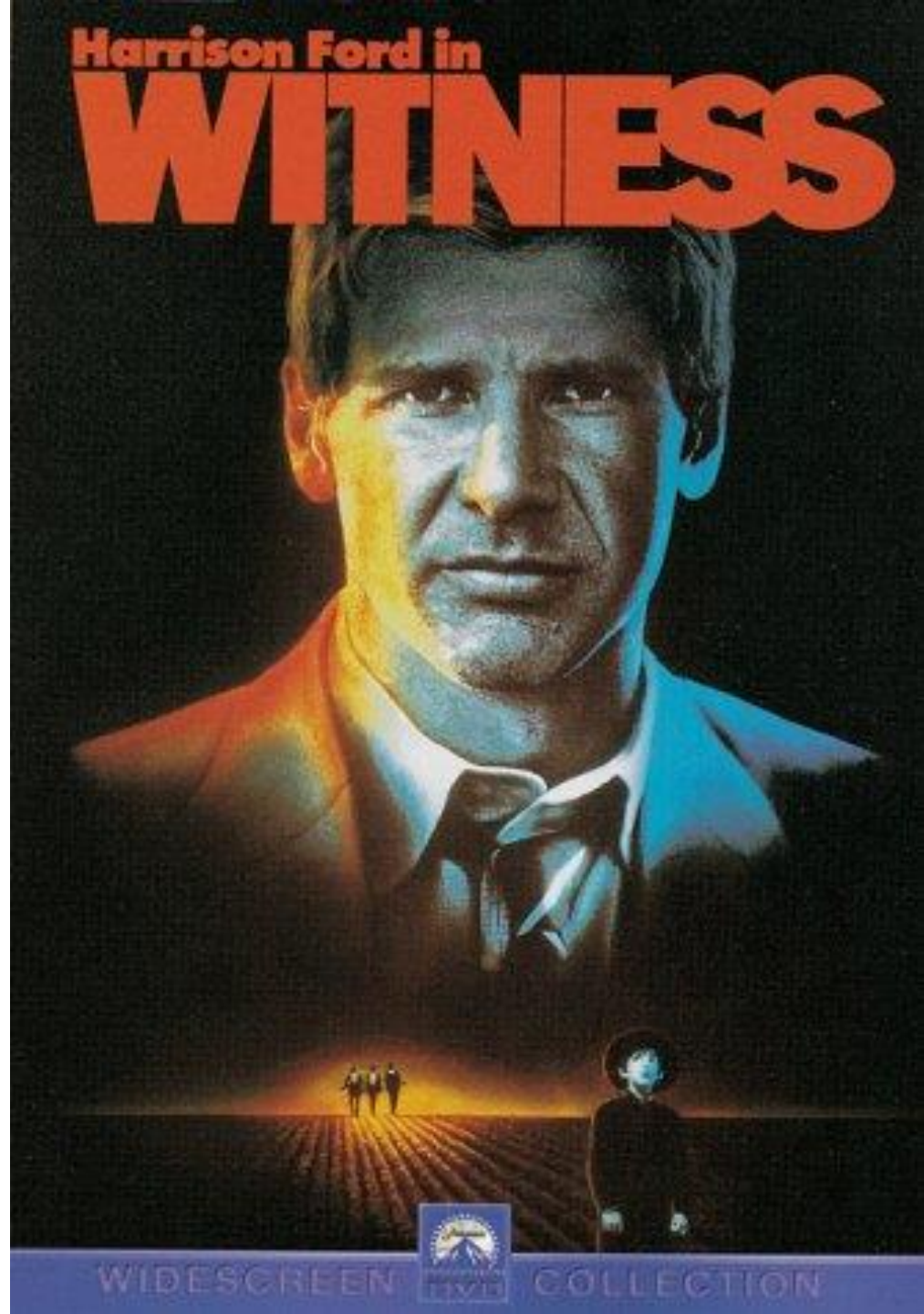
# HSC Rubric

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate **understanding** of a text's **distinctive qualities** and how these **shape meaning**
- organise, develop and express **ideas** using language appropriate to audience, purpose and form

# Approach

- Form and structure
- Ideas first
- Characterisation
- Key scenes and sequences
- Setting
- Language



# Mega Essay

- Two to three key ideas
- Through characters/poetry
- Judicious textual evidence
- Analysis of language
- Personal response



A composite image of a woman's face with a world map overlay. The woman has blue skin and green eyes. The world map is overlaid on her face, with the continents in green and yellow. The map is positioned such that it appears to be part of her facial features, with the Americas on the left, Europe and Africa in the center, and Asia and Australia on the right. The text is centered over the map.

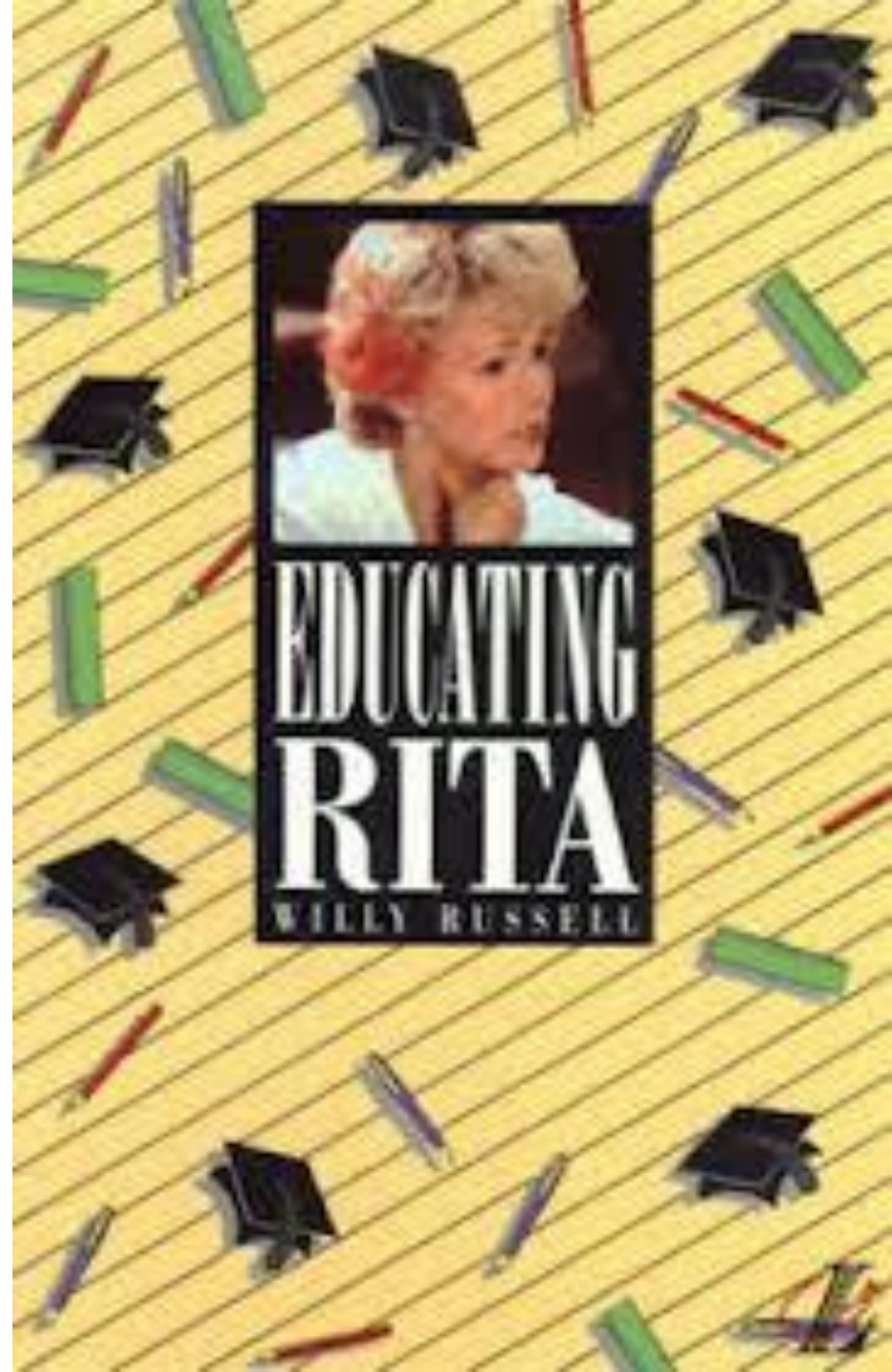
# **Module C**

## **Into the World**

### **The Global Village**

# Module C

- Explore and analyse texts used in a **specific situation in society**
- Social and cultural aspects conveyed through language
- Language/theatrical /dramatic/techniques
- Meaning conveyed



# Marking Guidelines

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of the **ways** texts and **meaning** are shaped by **context**
- organise, develop and express **ideas** using language appropriate to audience, purpose, context and form

# Key terms from the rubric

- **Specific Situation:** What is the context ? How does it relate to society?
- **Ideas and bodies of knowledge:** What message/s does the text convey? What is its relationship to society?
- **Attitudes:** What expression or outlook is communicated to the audience?
- **Belief systems:** What are the social and cultural aspects of the text? How are they expressed through language?

# Global Village

- Individuals and communities living in a global context
- Positive and negative aspects
- Attitudes, values and beliefs shaped by context
- Role of technology: ways we communicate, engage and interact



# Related Texts

- *Social Network*
- *The Quiet American*
- 'Muse' – Uprising
- *Avatar*
- *An Inconvenient truth*
- 'Prayer of the Refugee' – Rise Against -  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-SQGOYOjxs>
- *Hunger Games*



# Into the World

- Aspects of growing up and transitions into new phases of life and the broader world
- Life experiences grounded in context
- Growth, change and other consequences
- Different pathways
- Textual features that shape knowledge, attitudes and beliefs



# Related Texts

- *Jasper Jones* – Craig Silvey
- *To Kill a Mocking Bird* - Harper Lee
- *Catcher in the Rye* - Salinger
- *The Red Tree* and *The Arrival* – Shaun Tan
- *The Island* – Armin Greder
- *Edward Scissorhands*
- *Juno*
- *Motor Cycle Diaries*
- *Whale Rider*
- *Skin*
- *Slum Dog Millionaire*
- Nam Li's *The Boat*



# Preparation

- Comparison/contrast columns
- Mind maps
- Learning objects
- Recordings of texts
- Developing a solid general response and then practising being flexible by responding to a range of questions.
- Exercising the hand
- Choice of pen

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT



*When you have a dream, don't let anything dim it.  
Keep hoping, keep trying ... the sky is the limit!*  
*Anonymous*